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**A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON TRUE ISLAM:
A CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATION OF ALI SHARI'ATI'S
THOUGHTS AND VIEWS ON THE ROLE
OF THE IRANIAN ENLIGHTENED THINKERS**

by

Farid Mahdavi-Izadi

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of**

Doctor of Philosophy

(History)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN – MADISON

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A dissertation entitled

**"A New Perspective on True Islam:
A Conceptual Foundation of Ali Shari'ati's Thoughts and
Views on the Role of the Iranian Enlightened Thinkers."**

submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Wisconsin-Madison
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
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by

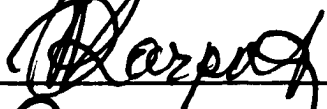
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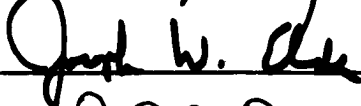
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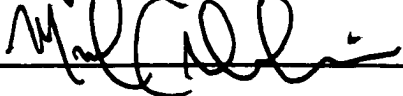
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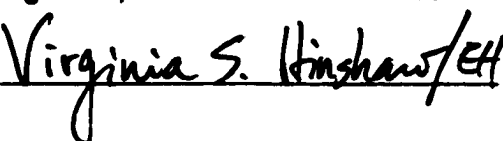
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CONTENTS

Introduction	1
A Bibliographical Outline of Shari'ati's Life	10
 I. An Enlightened Thinker's Responsibility in His Society (Rowshanfekr Va Mas'ouliyyat-e Ou dar Jâme'a)	19
Is an Intellectual an Enlightened Thinker (Rowshanfekr)?	24
Qualities of an Enlightened Thinker (Rowshanfekr)	27
a. Divine Worship (Ebâdat)	27
b. Exertion (Kâr)	29
c. Social Struggle (Mobârezeah Ijtemâei)	31
From Where Shall We Begin? (Az Kojâ Aghâz Koneim?)	33
Return to Cultural Self	36
What is to Be Done? (Chea Bâyard Kard?)	38
How Could Islamic Protestantism Be Achieved?	42
 II. An Ideal Islamic Society and Divinely Inspired Leadership (Ummat va Imâmate)	44
An Ideal Islamic Society (Ummat)	48
Divinely Inspired Leadership (Imâmate)	54
Husayn's Revolution	58
Perspectives for an Ideal Leadership and Society	63
 III. Ali Shari'ati's Perspective on Islam	69
The Absolute Oneness of God (Tawhid)	70
a. Qur'an and the Concept of Tawhid	72
b. Shari'ati's View of Tawhid and Shirk	73
• Ignorance (Jahl)	74
• Fear and Profit (Tars and Naf'a)	76
Shari'ati and the Question of the True Islam	79
a. The Establishment of the Direct Connection Between God and Humans (<i>Ejâd-e Râbete-ye Mostagheem</i> <i>Miân-e Khodâ va Ensân</i>)	80
b. Universal Equality (<i>Barâbari-ye-Omomee</i>)	81
c. Mutual Consultation in Government (<i>Shurâ Dar Hokoumat</i>)	84
d. People's Happiness and Adversity are the Cause of Their Acts and Inherent Quality not the Cause of Intercessions and Affinities (<i>Sa'âdat va Shaqâvat-e Afrâd Ma'loul-e</i> <i>A'mâl va Safât-e Zâti ânân Ast, na Ma'loul-e Shafa'at-hâ va</i> <i>Qrâbat-hâ</i>)	85
e. Intellect and Knowledge (<i>A'ql va Ilm</i>)	86
f. Compatibility Between Religion and Civilization (<i>Sâzesh</i> <i>Miân-e Dîn va Tamaddon</i>)	87
g. Humans Possess an Unchangeable Tradition (<i>Ensân Dârâ-ye</i> <i>Sunnati Ast Ta'qir Nâpazir</i>)	89
h. Other Relevant Factors	90

•To Inform Humans about the Secrets and the Order of Nature (Tavajjoh Dâdan-e Ensân be Nezâm-e Tabi'at va Asrâr-e ân)	90
•Acknowledging Instinct and Human Desires (E'traf be Ghrâyez va Havas'ha-ye Ensâni)	91
•Acknowledging the Rights of Other Religions and Nations (E'traf be Hoqq-e Melal va Madhâheb-e Bigâneh)	92
•Acknowledging the Principle of Evolution (E'traf be Nâmoos-e Takâmol)	92
•Religion is to Benefit the Human Being not to Conquer and Minimize Him (Din Barâ-ye Masle'hat-e Ensân Ast na Taskhir va Ezlâl-e Ôu)	93
•Freedom of Discussion and Expression (Azâdi-ye Bahs va Ebrâz-e Nazar)	94
IV. World-View (Jahân-Bini) as the Foundation of an Islamic Ideology	96
World-View (Jahân-Bini)	98
a. Ideal Human (Ensân)	98
Characteristics of an Ideal Human (Ensân)	100
b. History (Târikh)	107
c. Society (Jâme'a)	113
Conclusion	116
Endnotes	121
Bibliography	138

Introduction

Since his sudden death in 1977 at the age of forty-four, Ali Shari'ati has been portrayed by many scholars as 'the outstanding intellectual of ... the whole of contemporary Iran,'¹ 'the main intellectual, comparable to Franz Fanon,'² 'a committed intellectual ... possessed great genius and creativity,'³ and R. Campbell refers to him as one of the main architects of the 1979 Revolution.⁴ Above all, however, I believe that Shari'ati was an ideologue and in my opinion an injustice would be done if he were referred to as a sociologist, Islamic philosopher, Islamicist, philologist, or any other term that may have been associated with Shari'ati's expertise. His academic background and beliefs carried dreams, objectives and aims far exceeding his fields of study. With the massive amount of knowledge accumulated throughout his life, he was determined to bring changes to the socio-political outlook of Iran.

Shari'ati was well aware of the turbulent twentieth century history of Iran. Its reactionary, conservative, and traditional clergy class, along with Western cultural and political domination, confused and segregated the young generation of Iranians. His recognition of this dilemma made him determined to introduce a new ideology that would be more appealing to this perplexed generation. Therefore, his intention was to rediscover the most recognizable and influential element of the Iranian society, Islam, and reconstruct it into a revolutionary

ideology that would mobilize the masses, in particular the young hoping to challenge the existing regime.

The most important question in Shari'ati's mind was how could he produce such an ideology that would not only defy the existing Iranian regime, but, at the same time challenge the dominant Western ideologies to which the new generation of Iran was exposed, attracted, and accustomed. He knew from the beginning that this would be very hard to achieve. After all, this young generation was on the verge of forsaking its cultural heritage for the sake of Western culture. Perhaps the answer rested in the demographic composition of the Iranian social structure. Since Pahlavi's modernization attempt had failed to embrace every social segment and geographical section of Iran, the poor and often underprivileged rural people fell between the cracks. One result of this was a mass migration of rural people to the urban sections of the country. Eventually, most of them took up residence in poor urban sections, which provided a breeding ground for the future students whose access to Western culture and ideas on a daily basis, sharply contrasted with their own conservative Islamic upbringing. Shari'ati recognized the need to cultivate his Islamic message and ideology through Iranian students and intellectuals, rather than those who had already converted to Western cultural ideas.

Since Islam was an integral part of Iranian culture, revitalization of it would be the key to Shari'ati's revolutionary ideas. He knew full well that Western ideologies, Marxism-Leninism, in particular, had attracted many university

students, especially those from the lower economic stratum, whose solution to the social, political, and economic dissatisfaction of the Iranians lay primarily in agitating for economic equality. This group viewed Islam, and religion in general, as a reactionary force that perpetuated existing social, economic, and political affairs and must be rejected. Thus, the followers of Marxism-Leninism were determined to replace existing conditions with a socialist revolution modeled after those of the Soviets and the Chinese. As Marxist-Leninists vowed to destroy Islam as a reactionary force, Shari'ati turned to Islam, viewing it as a universal religion whose ideology would liberate, not only the Iranian people, but perhaps, the whole Islamic world.

It is my opinion that Shari'ati's intention was twofold. First, Islamic ideology would be used as a force to counterbalance the appeal of Marxism-Leninism. Secondly, this ideology would awaken the political consciousness of Iranian people by advocating that all the components of an ideal society have a profound presence in their culture and that they should search, study, and analyze them with a new perspective. This is why, from the beginning, Shari'ati broke away from the clergy class and referred to them as superstitious and reactionary conservatives. This separation was necessary in order to attract young minds for his version of an Islamic ideology and to establish legitimacy between Iranian intellectuals and young religious-oriented students whose Islamic culture was an integral part of their daily lives.

Our discussion thus far will lead us to the central point of this dissertation. The main theme is not, to give an overall account of Ali Shari'ati's personality and views, as some scholars have attempted. Rather, the aim is twofold: First and foremost, I will analyze Shari'ati's works in order to demonstrate his attempt to reconstruct a specifically Iranian Islamic ideology to counter the appeal of Western ideas. Secondly, I will attempt to discuss his goal of extracting Islam from its traditional and conservative basis into a dominant ideological force that could challenge Western ideologies and at the same time, revive a universal appeal of Islam for all Muslims.

Shari'ati in his short but fruitful intellectual life never got the chance to organize his thoughts and ideas into scholarly works, and even remarked to a friend before his departure to London in 1977, that "when he has time he is going to do real research, rethink and rewrite some of his ideas in a scholarly manner."⁵ Thus, some of his thoughts are repeated and slightly different from one source to another. Hence, it would be best to rely heavily on his Persian sources rather than those analyzed in English. It is also of interest to note that since his death, his lectures, class notes, articles, and books have been duplicated, published, and collected into fifty-two volumes under different titles.

In Chapter one, I will seek to illustrate how Shari'ati was determined to reintroduce Iranian-Islamic cultural and political identities into a society that was in jeopardy of succumbing to Western culture and ideologies. He was not the only promoter of this notion. I will also briefly discuss the ideas and approaches

of two leading Iranian intellectuals, Fakhral-Din Shâdmân and Jalâl Al-e Ahmad, who were the pioneers in advocating the renewal of the Iranian-Islamic culture in twentieth century Iran. However, Shari'ati managed to have a more profound impact than other Iranian intellectuals on the young generation, through his new and revolutionary reinterpretation of Islam. His numerous lectures on this topic are witness to his relentless efforts to define what is an intellectual and determine his role in redirecting the society toward an Iranian-Islamic cultural and political identity. Such works include: *What is to Be Done?*, *Return, Revolutionary Reconstruction of the Self*, *Spheriodal Structure of Cultural Sociology*, and *Recognizing the Iranian-Islamic Identity*.

Shari'ati perceived that it is feasible to achieve such a goal if intellectuals are responsible enough to partake in the task. He then proceeded to argue that one must first analyze and comprehend the concept of 'intellectual' and determine who is entitled to be called as such. He furthermore questioned whether or not it is proper to use such a term in a traditional society like Iran where Islam has always had a major role. In perusing this argument, he introduced the term "enlightened thinker (*rowshanfekr*)," that was more in sync with the Iranian culture and history than the term intellectual. His definition for 'enlightened thinker' was a person who is self-aware of his human status in time, place, historical context, and the society that he lives in.

Shari'ati explained that an enlightened thinker could attain self-awareness through divine worship, exertion, and social struggle. By achieving these traits,

an enlightened thinker would be willing to guide his people towards their cultural identity, in this case, the Iranian-Islamic identity. Hence, the first task is to know and rediscover Islam. Shari'ati sternly criticized the existing form of Shi'ite Islam being practiced in Iran, claiming that it was full of superstition and that the conservative religious leaders made every attempt to maintain the status quo. He argued that what was left of the existing form of Islam was an empty shell and in dire need of reform. Therefore, he laid the foundation for an Islamic Protestantism as the only viable option if the determination was to maintain any form of political and cultural identity.

Chapter two presents an analysis of Shari'ati's goal to establish an ideal Islamic society through the reconstruction of the predominant Shi'ite sect of Islam in Iran. The question of divinely inspired leadership (*Imâm*) will be given special attention. He argued that an ideal society needs an ideal leadership in order to be able to guide its members toward a government based upon divine justice. Shari'ati had applied sociological and political analyses to Shi'ism in order to educate and convince his audience that Shi'ism was heir to the true revolutionary Islam of the prophet Muhammad and that Shi'ism was indeed a religion of protest; protest against the social injustice of the Shah's regime and unjust governments in the whole Islamic world. Some of his works such as: *Shi'ite a Complete Party, An Ideal Islamic Society and Divinely Inspired Leadership, Husayn, the Successor of Adam, Ali Founder of Unity, Religion against Religion,*

Martyrdom, Alavi Shi'ism and Safavi Shi'ism, and Waiting for the Religion of Protest, deal primarily with this issue.

Also to be examined is Shari'ati's view on Shi'ism as a political party (*hezb*). Like advocates of other revolutionary political programs, Shari'ati believed that Shi'ism possessed a world-view, an ideology, a philosophy of history, and social discipline, class base and leadership. However, the aim was not to just improve the social, economic, and the political affairs of Iranian society, but also to create an ideal egalitarian society based on divine justice.

Chapter three examines Shari'ati's attempt to define true Islam. Even though his audiences were primarily Iranians, he realized that the West had portrayed Islam as a reactionary force. In fact, conservative, corrupt, and intransigence religious leaders who desired to make Islam attuned enough to deal with political, social, and economic issues of the time did control the Islamic World. Shari'ati's goal, through the unquestionable source of the holy Qur'an, was to reintroduce the humanistic and universal aspects of Islam to a young generation of Iranians, as well as scholarly attention to others in the Islamic world. In reintroducing true Islam, Shari'ati gave numerous lectures on this topic. As a result, volumes of his works such as: *Islamology, World-View and Ideology, What Is Islam?, Philosophy of History, Cain-Abel, Selection and/or Election, and Method of Recognizing Islam* were produced.

A great deal of the chapter's exploration has been devoted to the fourteen factors that Shari'ati refers to as the principal foundation of early Islam. Some of

these factors deal with the conflicts between different social class systems that according to Shari'ati began with the animosity between Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam. Shari'ati argued that Cain represented an agrarian-based society of ownership and economic monopoly, and that Abel was representative of the age of common ownership or pastoralism. I will also discuss Shari'ati's views on how Islam promotes universal equality, religious freedom, the foundation of a democratic government, the freedom of choice vs. pre-destination, and the pursuit of knowledge, a partial list of his fourteen principal factors. We have also analyzed Shari'ati's view on the Oneness of God (*tawhid*) as a doctrine of Islam, revolving around the relationship between God, man and nature. *Tawhid* gives dignity, independence, and power to man so that he may strive for perfection. Shari'ati stated that in order to achieve human perfection, we must avoid the elements of polytheism (*shirk*) and shun ignorance, fear, profit, corruption, and greed in our lives.

Chapter four focuses on Shari'ati's examination of the world-view as the foundation of Islamic ideology. His definition of world-view was to regard the whole universe one, rather than to divide it into categories such as this world and the hereafter, the natural and supernatural, substance and meaning, spirit and body. His primary aim was to give Islam an ideology that would be able to challenge any existing Western ideology and at the same time, prove to Muslims that they do not have to reconstruct their lives and societies according to foreign ideas. He believed that the outcome of a person's world-view depends greatly

on the materialistic and spiritual factors of his surroundings that also determine his thoughts and life-style. He argued that to understand this Islamic world-view we ought to analyze three major components that are important to the Islamic ideology. These components are: the purpose of creation of humans in Islam, the trends and events that occurred in various movements of time creating the Islam of today, and a society which is representative of what Muslims have produced. Like all other topics revolving around Islam and Islamic ideology, Shari'ati allocated many lectures to the topic of world-view, including: *Culture and Ideology, World-View and Ideology, Four Prisons of Mankind, The Ideal Man, Recognition and The History of Religions, Return to Self: Return to which Self?*

A major attempt will be made to focus on Shari'ati's perception of the meaning of the form, human being. In Islam, a human being is called by different names such as *bashar* and *ensân*, between which Shari'ati made a distinction. His argument revolves around the reasons as to why God is using different names to refer to His creation. Hence, he interpreted *ensân* as the ideal human being, one that is closer to God's intention of a perfect being. On the other hand, *bashar*, meaning mankind, is the biological human body, or being that has committed all historical atrocities and is unknowingly trying to defy the purpose of the creation of man by God.

We will also touch upon Shari'ati's view of Islamic history and his view of the trends and events that occurred at various times throughout history, ranging

from the intellectual fluorescence to the Islamic world of today. Also analyzed, will be the fact that somehow during the course of history, Muslims have retreated from the goal of producing a perfect society. We will discuss Shari'ati's view on how to lay the foundation for an archetype society in which the goal is to produce the ideal human (*ensân*).

A Bibliographical Outline of Shari'ati's Life

Although Shari'ati's Islamic message and ideology had a tremendous impact on the young generation of Iran, there were many times when his doctrines were easily misinterpreted. Therefore, to avoid such misinterpretations in our study here, it may be helpful to become familiar with Shari'ati's early educational background, academic and intellectual development and political activities and struggles.

Ali Shari'ati was born on December 3, 1933 in the village of Mazinân, near the city of Mashhad in the province of Khorâsân. His father, Muhammad Taghi Shari'ati, was a respectable and a distinguished scholar whose views on Islam were more dynamic than other mainstream religious scholars. In order to reflect his position on Islam, Muhammad Taghi Shari'ati founded a society in 1941 by the name of "Kânoon-e Nashr-e Haghâyegh-e Eslami" (The Society for The Publication of Islamic Facts.) In his book, *Kavir* (Desert), Ali Shari'ati clearly indicates how he became familiarized with his father's guidance, interpretation and writings.⁶ In describing his father's influence, Ali Shari'ati referred to his father as 'the one who introduced the love of *Imâm* Ali in my heart and soul.'⁷ In

addition, he explained how his father taught him philosophy, literature, and theology, subjects that although others might learn in their adulthood, he studied and learned at a very young age.⁸ Ali Shari'ati admitted that his father inspired him in philosophy and explains that learning philosophy came to him naturally because it was in his genes.⁹ Eventually, philosophy became a type of obsession for Ali Shari'ati, so much so, that his father pointed out to him that he needed to spend more time on his schoolwork and less time reading books of philosophy. It is evident that Ali Shari'ati's early interests and learning about Islam were very much shaped by his father.

Ali Shari'ati recounted one of his first encounters with philosophy while attending high school. One day he picked up one of his father's books, written by Maurice Maeterlinck, *Reflections of a Great Mind*. He read the first sentence, "when we blow out a candle, where does its flame go?" Shari'ati claims that it was this phrase that transferred his interests from reading just any book, to becoming a passionate reader of philosophical works. His interest in philosophy became particularly focused on the development of philosophy in Europe.¹⁰

With Shari'ati's entrance into the Teacher's Institute of Mashhad, we witness the evolvement of his political awareness. Perhaps this had to do partly, with his father's political membership in "Nehzat-e Moghavemat-e Melli" (The National Resistance Movement).

The early 1950's in Iranian history, dealt with Prime Minister Mossadegh's struggle against foreign domination in Iran. Ali Shari'ati, along with thousands of

other nationalists, associated himself with this struggle. Shari'ati referred to his life before this period as "the calm before the storm," meaning the "storm" to be his sudden political activism. Mossadegh's era ended with a coup d'etate followed by his arrest, trial and imprisonment. After Shari'ati's graduation from the Teacher's Institute, his political involvement refocused itself around intellectual and social issues. While securing a teaching position in the village of Ahmadabad, Mashhad, he founded the "Islamic Society for Pupils and Students." This society stayed active for almost eight years and some of Shari'ati's lectures were printed under the title of Maktab-e Vâseteh (Middle Way School.) One can easily claim that this society had a permanent impact on his role as an activist, social leader and intellectual. His Middle Way School outlined a program where the intention was to make Islam a vital ideology that could easily replace existing ones. Shari'ati argued that Islam is composed of three guidelines:

- a) Islam possess its own school of thought, "Realism" in contrast to the various western schools of thought.
- b) Islam possess social and economic policies that are based on scientific socialism. Hence, it is a middle way between capitalism and communism.
- c) From a political point of view, Islam does not share the world-views of either the Soviet Union or the United States. It will be based upon another idea that would encompass all Islamic nations.¹¹

In 1956, after passing the university entrance exams, Shari'ati was accepted into Mashhad University's Faculty of Letters. While pursuing his studies, he laid the groundwork for a literary society whose aim was to discuss

political issues under the guise of a "literary society." Under the watchful eyes of SAVAK, the regime's secret police, free political debate and discussion was extremely difficult. It was during these university years in Mashhad that Shari'ati met his future wife, Pourân Shari'at Razavi. Ali Shari'ati did not elaborate on his married life with Pourân, except to write in *Kavir*, that life had become more enjoyable. He stated that he had thought heaven existed in another world and that joy was found in intellect, science, politics and ideology. However, with his marriage, his wife had introduced him to an unknown world.¹²

As one of the top students in his class, Ali Shari'ati was awarded a government sponsored scholarship to France. However, the fact that he had been imprisoned for his membership in a secret organization called The National Resistance Movement (Nehzat-e Moqavemat-e Melli, founded by prominent dissidents in 1957) temporarily delayed his departure.¹³ Finally, he departed for France in 1959.

Shari'ati's arrival in Paris did not bring about any drastic change in his political life. In fact, it became much easier for him to actively and openly participate in political activity. There were no secret police to monitor his every move. He pursued his education and received a Ph.D. in either Sociology or Philosophy, a question that has been debated among scholars. In his *Gofteh-Goo-ha-ye Tanha'ie* (Dialogues of Solitude), he recounted his learning of the French language that mostly took place in isolation. One day he decided to quit language school and picked up Alexis Carrel's *La Priere*, and locked himself in

his room. With the help of a dictionary, he managed to translate the entire book into Farsi.¹⁴ This was the beginning of his literary works. He translated works including: *The Wretched of the Earth*, by Franz Fanon, *Five Scientific Conferences About Islam: Social Psychology of Iran*, and translations of Che Guevara's *Guerilla Warfare* and Sartre's *What is Poetry?*

In 1962, Ali Shari'ati helped to form "The National Front," a political organization that was banned in Iran after the 1953 coup d'état. This organization was a major contribution to the continuation of political activities in Europe. Shari'ati was in charge of publishing the group's newsletter called Iran-e Azâd (Free Iran) and wrote numerous articles for the newsletter. After several months of heavy involvement in this political organization, he came to believe that it was not revolutionary enough. He found that he tended to have a more lenient view towards an Islamic revolution and favored changes less secular than the ones that The National Front advocated. Hence, in 1962, Shari'ati, along with several close friends decided to form the "Nehzat-e Azâdi-ye Iran" (Liberation Movement of Iran) in Europe, a political organization that had been originally founded in Iran by some prominent former members of The National Front, including Ayatollah Mahmud Taleghani and Mohandes Mehdi Bazargan. Ali Shari'ati's other political activities extended even further to being in charge of the newsletter produced by The Iranian Students Confederation, and wrote articles in "Al-Mujahid," the official newspaper of the Algerian Liberation

Movement (FLN), and also played an active political role in their struggle against French colonialism in Algeria.

Ali Shari'ati wrote in his *Goffeh-Goo-Ha-ye Tanha'ie* (Dialogues of Solitude) and *Kavir* (Desert) that his association with several intellectuals, while pursuing his education in France, shaped his ideological awareness. The person who had the most influence on him was Louis Massignon (1883-1962). He wrote about him that:

"More than all, what I learned and especially what I became was due to Professor Louis Massignon who had gathered the West and the East in himself."¹⁵

It was during a two-year collaboration with Massignon from 1960-1962, while Massignon was doing research on Fatima, that one could easily perceive Massignon's profound effects on Shari'ati's works. Shari'ati also attended numerous lectures given by Henry Corbin, Raymond Aron, George Pulitzer, Franz Fanon, Jacques Berque, Roger Garaudy, Georges Gurvitch, and Jean-Paul Sartre. It was the direct influence of these intellectuals and philosophers, in addition to his reading of Jasper, Heidegger, Husserl, Hegel, Marx and Marcuse, that added a new dimension to his philosophical and sociological approach to religion.

Upon his return to Iran in 1965, he was immediately arrested for his anti-regime activities in France. He was put in prison for six months before being released, due to the pressure put upon the Shah's regime by Europe. These types of arbitrary arrests of educated Iranians were very common and

reminiscent of colonial policy in Africa and South and Southeast Asia.

Intellectuals who conformed to the policies of the Shah's regime were handsomely rewarded and the non-conformists were either put into jail or deprived of official positions. Shari'ati always resented the educated conformists, feeling that they had betrayed their principles and had become "irresponsible intellectuals with no commitment" and referred to them as "alienated imitators who have no pride and are illiterate without any integrity, passion, honor, and are arrogant and ignorant."¹⁶

After his release from prison, Shari'ati returned to Mashhad and began to teach secondary school in a village. Since most universities were under-staffed and the scarcity of professors in the fields of history and sociology was quite noticeable, in 1966 the history department at Mashhad University reluctantly offered Shari'ati an assistant professorship. Perhaps, the government hoped that this gesture would secure Shari'ati's support. However, Shari'ati knew his mission. After all, he could have stayed in France, faced less political pressure and fewer restrictions, and received recognition for his scholarship.

Teaching at Mashhad University was exactly where Shari'ati needed to be in order to convey his ideas to an eager, young generation. However, within one year, the university administrators could no longer tolerate the political content of Shari'ati's lectures and his Islamic revolutionary ideas, and dismissed him from his position. Regardless of his dismissal, however, his style of teaching,

intellectual camaraderie with students after class sessions, and his new interpretation of Islam had quickly garnered many student admirers.

After his dismissal from Mashhad University, Shari'ati moved to Tehran and gave lectures on various topics at different colleges and lecture halls. However, he did focus on carrying out his intellectual activity at Hoseiniyeh Ershâd, an Islamic institution and lecture hall that was built in the northern section of Tehran by a philanthropist named Muhammad Humayoon.¹⁷ The most active and popular members of this institution, besides Shari'ati, were Mehdi Bâzargân and Ayatollah Morteza Motahhari. However, it was Shari'ati's popularity that brought thousands of eager followers to the center to listen, tape his lectures, and distribute millions of copies of them all over the country. His most famous lectures were on topics such as: "Methodology of Understanding Islam," "What is to be done," "Husayn, the Heir of Adam," "Martyrdom," "Tawhid," and "Waiting for the Religion of Protest," just to name a few. Almost every lecture had an underlying message and used a particular historical event to help criticize the political, social and religious conditions in Iran. Shari'ati's criticism of organized religion was just as harsh as that of any other issue in his lectures. To Shari'ati, the clergy class in general, and the Ulama (religious scholars) in particular, were the guardians of the people against the oppression of the regime. However, they preferred to cooperate with the authorities or stay silent. Opposition from members of the clergy class, especially among the uneducated reactionaries who were unable to comprehend Shari'ati's lectures, produced a division among

the clergy. Thus, some became ardent critics of Shari'ati's works, even though they had never read them or attended his lectures.

During his five years of intellectual activity at the Hoseiniyeh Ershâd, Shari'ati laid the ideological foundation for an Islamic revolution. His popularity reached a point that alarmed the regime so much that they considered him to be a threat to its interests. Thus, in 1972 the Iranian secret police shut down the center and ended a brilliant chapter in Shari'ati's intellectual activity, as well as ending a younger generations' political and cultural awareness. After Shari'ati went into hiding, the secret police arrested his elderly, frail father and banned all his books. However, they continued to be published under the pseudonyms of Ali Sarbadâri, Ali Mazinâni, Muhammad Ali 'Ashari, Ali Eslâm Doust, Muhammad Ali Ashenâ, and other.¹⁸ For the sake of his father, Shari'ati turned himself in. He then spent the next three years in prison and not until international pressure, in particular, a petition presented on his behalf by the Algerian government was he released and put under house arrest, where he remained until May of 1977. Soon after his release, he obtained an exit visa under the name of Ali Mazinâni. He left for London and one month later, on June 19, 1977, under mysterious circumstances, he was found dead in his room. The secret police operating abroad were the prime suspects.¹⁹

Chapter One

An Enlightened Thinker's Responsibility in His Society (Rowshanfekr Va Mas'ouliyyat-e Ou dar Jâme'a)

Muhammad Reza Shah's authoritarian rule, along with the rapid Westernization of Iran during the 1960's, and particularly the 1970's, put Iran in danger of losing its cultural and political identity. As a result, a new genre of religious and secular opposition arose. Some expressed their social, economic, and political frustration in new radical political movements that manifested themselves in clandestine armed struggle against the Pahlavi regime. (I should make clear that although the nature of the armed opposition was the same, the ideology differed entirely.) Others, particularly non-clerical intellectuals, proclaimed their antagonism towards the regime's intentional policy of promoting the cultural dominance of the West.

Among the armed opposition emerged two groups of very distinct ideologies, Marxists-Leninists and Islamic. The most visible and active Marxist organization was the Sazemân-e Cherikhâ-ye Feda'i-ye Khalq-e Iran (The Organization of the Iranian People's Devotee Guerrillas), led by Bijan Jazani, a former member of the Tudeh communist party. There were also less important communist organizations, such as Sazemân-e Azâdibakhsh-e Khalqâ-ye Iran (Organization for the Liberation of the Iranian People), Setâreh Sorkh (The Red Star), Gorouhe Luristan (Luristan Group), Be Sou-ye Enqelâb (Toward the

Revolution), and Sazemân-e Armân-e Khalq (Organization for the People's Ideal), that attempted to bring the masses to their cause. These were severely curtailed by the Iranian secret police, Sâzemân-e Ettelâ'ât va Amniyat-e Keshvar (National Information and Security Organization), also known as SAVAK.¹

In contrast, Islamic armed struggle organizations formulated a revolutionary interpretation of Islam as the focus of their ideology. Sâzemân-e Mojâhedîn-e Khalq-e Iran (Organization of the Iranian People's Warriors), founded in 1965, was considered the most influential organization and managed to become a primary voice for the disgruntled, religiously oriented university students and intellectuals. Gorouhe Abouzar (Abouzar Group), Gorouhe Shi'îyan-e Râsteen (True Shi'ite Group), Gorouhe Allah Akbar (Allah Akbar Group), Gorouhe al-Fajar (al-Fajar Group), Hezb-e Melal-e Islami (Party of the Islamic Nations), and Fedâi'ân-e Islam (Devotees of Islam) were also active Islamic organizations, however, they had never succeeded in attracting followers beyond their localities. All of these opposition groups however, saw Islam, in particular Shi'ism, as the most legitimate political opponent to the Pahlavi regime.²

The non-clerical intellectuals' opposition to the Pahlavi regime was generally aimed towards the apathy that the regime showed toward the Iranian-Islamic identity, while promoting the rapid spread of Western culture in Iran. However, the question of the Iranian encounter with the West and the issue of the Western cultural domination in Iran had been of special concern amid non-

clerical intellectuals since the 1920's. Among the earliest political thinkers of this genre who popularized the ever-increasing Western influence and at the same time directly inspired Shari'ati through his literary works, was Seyyed Fakhr al-Din Shâdmân (1907-1967).³ In his famous book, *Taskhir-e Tammadon-e Farangi* (The Conquest of Western Civilization), Shâdmân attested that the 2,500-year history of Iran is filled with events and trends that are the manifestation of her struggle against powerful enemies for survival. Despite all of those historical events, the Iran of the twentieth century is suffering from a cultural alienation that is caused by its most powerful enemy, Western civilization.⁴ Its victory over Iran would be "Iran's last defeat," stripping Iranians of their religion and cultural identity, making them mere slaves.⁵ The West, he indicated, would conquer Iran not by its military might and greater scientific knowledge, but by seeking the cultural weaknesses that exist within the society. He suggested two choices for dealing with Western civilization: either try to capture it by way of reason or to allow its influence to inundate the society.⁶ His proposal was "to capture the Western civilization before it captures us."⁷

Shâdmân's suggested blueprint against the West was first to purify the Persian language and then to protect and preserve the pre-Islamic and Islamic culture of Iran.⁸ However, it should be noted that he never rejected Western ideas or technology, and in fact invited his readers to learn from the West in order to resist its cultural influence. He severely criticized the *fokolis* (French term *faux-col*, meaning one who wears a necktie or a bow tie) as the pseudo-Westerners

who were the enemy from within and had no real knowledge of Western civilization but prescribed full imitation of Western culture.⁹ Shâdmân claimed that their only task was to pollute Iran with decadent aspects of Western culture. In doing so, he furthermore asserted that *fokolis* always blamed Islam as the cause of backwardness in the country. In reality, they were unaware of its glorious achievements in history. As Shâdmân stated, this is a good indication of their superficial knowledge of Iran and its history, forcing them to believe that the mere imitation of Western ideology means progress and prosperity. In short, Shâdmân prescribed to his readers, particularly the younger generation that the acquisition of intellectual independence and self-confidence was needed in order to halt Western cultural influence.¹⁰

Along with Shâdmân and Shari'ati, other important non-clerical intellectuals expressed a similar concern about Western influence over Iran. Of the many influential writers emerging in the 60's and 70's, a third, in particular, had a profound impact on the younger generation. Jalâl Al-e Ahmad (1923-1970) was born into a clerical family that originally came to Tehran from the village of Aurazan in the Tâliqân district. After finishing his primary and secondary education, he entered the Teacher's Training College, from which he graduated in 1946 and where he was intermittently a teacher for the rest of his life.¹¹

Al-e Ahmad's political activity began with his membership in the Marxist Tudeh Party, but tired quickly. However, he soon returned to politics by joining his friend Khalil Mâliki's independent political party, known as Niru-ye Sevvum

(Third Force). However, in the aftermath of 1953 coup that brought the Shah back to power, many difficulties arose, not unlike those encountered by most organized political parties striving to function in an atmosphere of censorship. To remedy his political curiosity, Al-e Ahmad once again turned to teaching and the pursuit of literary interests. As a prolific writer and translator, Al-e Ahmad wrote for the Tudeh Party and *Niru-ye Sevvum* publications, published novels and short stories, and wrote a major anthropological work. However, the publication that had the most profound impact on Iranian intellectual circles was his monograph entitled *Gharbzadegi* (Westoxication, or the state of being struck by the West). He defined *Gharbzadegi* as a social malady that has its roots in total imitation of Western culture. His main intention was to inform the Iranian people of the cultural transformation that was taking place in which the Iranian cultural identity, political sovereignty, and economic welfare were being affected by toxicity from without.¹²

Al-e Ahmad saw progress as an epidemic, one that was spread by the introduction and application of Western technologies that destroyed the local economy by encouraging consumers to depend heavily upon Western goods. Secondly, he argued that Iranian intellectuals who accepted and employed everything Western would defend the West and use it as the solution to the economic backwardness of the country. He regarded this philosophy as a way for these intellectuals to develop an environment that would facilitate the process of Western cultural, economic, and political hegemony over Iran. In his last work,

Dar Khedmat va Khiânat-e Rowshanfekrân (The Intellectuals: How they serve or Betray Their Country), Al-e Ahmad suggested that the "vaccine" for such a disease, *Gharbzadegi*, is the revival of the Iranian identity of Shi'ite Islam. Under the supervision of the Ulama, the guardian of the faith (Shi'ite Islam) and true representative of people, Iran's identity would be preserved and protected.¹³

Is an Intellectual an Enlightened Thinker (Rowshanfekr)?

Like Al-e Ahmad, Shari'ati devoted himself to the revival of the Islamic culture in an attempt to preserve Iranian identity over ever-increasing Western cultural influence. He believed that the Iranian identity could only be upheld if intellectuals undertook the responsibility of protecting, spreading, and conveying the authentic Islamic culture to the masses. However, he disagreed with the usage of *rowshanfekr* being widely applied to "intellectual" by educated Iranians. To Shari'ati, the term "intellectual" derived from "intellect," which means the capacity for knowledge and understanding, refers to an individual who is occupied in mental work, such as an educated person.¹⁴ On the other hand, the word *rowshanfekr* comes from the Persian words *rowshan*, meaning "bright" and *fekr*, which is the noun of the verb *fekr-kardan* meaning to "think".¹⁵ Hence, like the French word *clairvoyant* carries the idea of a special quality of mind not just mental work, *rowshanfekran* (plural form of *rowshanfekr*) are those people who do not limit themselves to a specific line of mental work. However, they are the ones who have the ability to recognize their positions in their society, analyze

existing social problems, and then convey them to the masses. On the contrary, intellectuals are the ones who are educated and do mental work but do not find any relation or connection of cause and effect between their lives and the existing social problems confronted by the masses.¹⁶ In short, Shari'ati concluded that, "a *rowshanfekr* was someone who was *khod-âgah* (conscience or self-aware) of his human status in the time, place and society that he lived in and possessing this conscience, made him automatically responsible."¹⁷ These qualities could easily be found in a person who was not formally educated. All he would need was social awareness and the ability to understand and try to remedy the social problems and suffering of his people. Therefore, Shari'ati asserted that it would be a mistake to use the word intellectual for *rowshanfekr*. He believed that the best definition for intellectual was *tahsil-kardeh* (educated) or *tasdiq-dâr* (licentiate).¹⁸

According to this definition, Shari'ati stated that a *rowshanfekr* is not someone who continues and completes the works of the previous scholars, but his responsibility, like prophets, is to move his people in a revolutionary direction where the result would be an alteration from a "static" into a dynamic society.¹⁹ Therefore, *rowshanfekrân* could not be part of the scholarly class who are confined to mental work or part of the unaware and stagnant masses who are constrained to the superstitious aspects of their culture. Rather, they are *khod-âgahân-e mas'oul* (the responsible self-aware) whose task is to make people aware of their status in their society, in other words, direct and lead the masses to

social awareness. Yet, according to Shari'ati, another clear distinction between intellectuals and *rowshanfekrân* is the way they perceive their social problems. An intellectual explains, analyzes and discovers "social realities." A *rowshanfekr* reveals the "social realities" and is determined to alter them for the good of the masses.²⁰

Shari'ati referred to the Islamic concept of *hikmah* (knowledge) as the true knowledge that is not confined to scientific or religious studies. It is "a specific human awareness, a conscious and divine insight into God's light."²¹ Furthermore, he believed that it is this divine light that leads humanity down the true path and makes them responsible to their society. Therefore, those who have the ability to acquire self-awareness attain *hikmah*. In order to clarify his view, Shari'ati posed the question: If a person becomes educated in the West and learns all about philosophers and various existing ideologies, will he be able to bring self-awareness to his own general public?²² Shari'ati did not intend to confuse his audiences by posing questions or giving different examples. Primarily, he wanted to convey the notion that a person might be able to comprehend various Western ideologies that are the products of Western cultural and historical processes, however, being determined to apply these same ideas to his traditional society would definitely have an undesirable result. He recommended that a *rowshanfekr* should first realize the time and place of his society in the historical process before attempting to bring awareness to his people. Therefore, his responsibility is to awaken them, and before taking a

political or revolutionary leadership role, try to become an ideological and political educator of his people.²³

Qualities of an Enlightened Thinker (Rowshanfekr)

Before further analysis of how a *rowshanfekr* can stimulate the political conscience of the masses by exposing them to the issues of the domestic injustice and foreign domination, it is necessary to understand how a person would be able to attain the status of a *rowshanfekr* in an Islamic society. Shari'ati stated that the most important element for becoming a *rowshanfekr* is *khod-âgâhi* (self-awareness). *Khod-âgâhi* is the inner ability that can lead, introduce and expose a person to the significance of self. It is above our attained knowledge, it introduces me to myself, and finally, it brings my attention to how valuable I am.²⁴ Therefore, it is essential to have an understanding of one's historical and cultural belongings before embracing any type of existing ideologies. According to Shari'ati, self-awareness could be achieved through: a) '*ebâdat* (divine worship), b) *kâr* (exertion), and c) *mobâreزه ijtemaei* (social struggle).²⁵

a. Divine Worship (Ebâdat)

Shari'ati clearly indicated that the purpose of the act of divine worship ('*ebâdat* or '*ibâda* in Arabic) has been tainted with incantations and superstitions, so much so, that people wrongly believe them to be part of the true '*ebâdat*. ('*Ebâdat*, comes from the Arabic root word of '*abd*, meaning servant, leveling and

paving the way or leading humans to their goals.)²⁶ Shari'ati believed that 'ebâdat is a procedure for following the existing divine rules in order to enhance the human self-consciousness. Furthermore, it is a reconstruction of self because life is full of greed, selfishness and other corruptive elements and the only thing that steers a person toward purification of self and also guides one in the direction of ultimate human values, is 'ebâdat.²⁷ In Islam, an important element of divine worship is daily prayer. Shari'ati stated that during every twenty-four hour time revolution, dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset and night, a Muslim has the opportunity to detach himself from worldly desires and establish a spiritual connection with God. He also stated that fasting, another important component of divine worship is needed in order to discipline one's physical wants, those things that consume human values and prevent a Muslim from spiritual decadence.²⁸ He also emphasized the importance of 'ebâdat, especially in a time when capitalism, a global system which had been dominating every economic, political and cultural aspect of the people, had put an unprecedented amount of pressure on them and had caused a disconnection between God and humans. This is more obvious now than during the agrarian age. In the agrarian age, Shari'ati assessed that people were less preoccupied with the political and cultural affairs of their lives. Hence, 'ebâdat was an effort to avert and break away from a synthetic existing social mold and bring to light the hidden self-awareness that every Muslim needs in order to free himself from the imposed economic or political ideology.²⁹

b. Exertion (*Kâr*)

Shari'ati asserted that first we ought to detach the proper *kâr* (exertion) from the improper *kâr* before attempting to analyze and comprehend it. A proper *kâr*, Shari'ati believed, has an ideological foundation that belongs to *ensân* (ideal human) who is able to distinguish between the real *kâr*, which is productive, and the improper one that is personal, a *kâr* that could sometimes be viewed as destructive. It is in this regard that he emphasized the importance of *kâr*, not merely as means for personal gains (such as obtaining better living standards or status in a society), but also as an essential element for the reconstruction of self and the betterment of the community.

That a man receives but only that for which he strives;
That his endeavors will be judged,³⁰

Relying upon this Qur'anic verse, Shari'ati made his determination that it is through exertion a person can bring about constructive changes for improving his society. He also stated that most revolutionary aspects of *kâr* are to free it from any restraints. Everyone is confined to a set of family, social and traditional molds. Without freeing ourselves from these molds, we will be unable to play a constructive role in our own lives, as well as those to whom we are responsible. He furthermore believed that we should view these molds as tools that could be utilized for higher goals, not as factors determining our objectives. By freeing ourselves from these molds, we will always think and feel about others before

ourselves. This was the essence of Shari'ati's "revolutionary role of *kâr* in self-reconstruction."³¹

According to Shari'ati, it is the middle class that has the ability to produce individuals who can embrace the revolutionary aspect of *kâr*. Since they are from a social class that is not corrupted by the comfort of an aristocratic upbringing or stricken by the poverty of the lower class, they are able to afford and receive an adequate education, familiarize themselves with different ideologies, and are able to comprehend the social, economic, and historical process of their society. Hence, it would be easier for them to free themselves from all the constraining molds.³² He also stated that this is why *rowshanfekrân* arise from the middle class. Their ideology can be derived from the experiences of the daily struggle of the masses. Practical observation and experience, along with theoretical knowledge, will eventually fashion their character into a revolutionary person who demands immediate changes for the society. On the other hand, upper class individuals' ideology would be shaped through written materials and theoretical knowledge that has meaning, but no spirit. Sometimes it may not even be applicable to the society that it was intended for, unlike the pragmatic experience that arises from direct contact with the common people. In short, Shari'ati believed in an individual whose tradition was linked to the masses and whose theoretical and practical knowledge were intertwined into one.³³

Shari'ati asserted that if theoretical knowledge is used in shaping a person's analytical deduction of the existing situation, the real *kâr* is the catalyst

for shaping a person's social and behavioral character so that he becomes one with the masses, thus, it is easier to break the molds to which we are confined.³⁴

c. Social Struggle (*Mobâreزه Ijtemâ'ei*)

Shari'ati opened his discussion on social struggle by agreeing with Plato, that man is a "political animal".³⁵ He argued that man's political involvement in society is his natural right as well as the foundation for awareness. He, furthermore, stated that it is only man, not animals, that are aware of their position and status in the environment that they reside. If he wishes, man can alter, improve, approve or disapprove of his surroundings in order to benefit himself and his society. Therefore, Shari'ati claimed that a non-political man could easily deprive himself from the most natural attribute, the linkage between him and his people, which are nothing but political views and perceptions of his surroundings.

To enhance his view on this issue, Shari'ati gave historic examples of how the Umayyad and the Abbasid dynasties tried to dissuade the masses from political participation, which was in direct contrast to the political involvements of the Muslims during the time of Prophet Muhammad and the Orthodox Caliphs. He argued that those periods of political apathy (Umayyads and the Abbasids) was now being sustained through capitalism and imperialism. By way of these two movements, there emerged a surge of different types of non-Islamic ideologies (i.e., Nationalism, Existentialism, Socialism, Marxism, and Fascism)

that have instigated further ethnic and racial tension and animosity, to the point that they still occupy and shift the *rowshanfekr's* attention from direct involvement in socio-political affairs, to ethnic and racial rivalries.³⁶ Shari'ati, furthermore, asserted that most of these ideologies perceived religion as an obstacle to the society's socio-political progress. Being influenced by these ideologies, if the purpose is progress, *rowshanfekrân* automatically reject Islam as an outdated doctrine that should be stricken from the society. When European intellectuals advocated total separation of church and state, it had much to do with the historical and social environment of nineteenth century Europe. Hence, our *rowshanfekrân* do not realize that nineteenth century Europe was a world apart from the Islamic societies of today. By opposing Islam, as an obstacle to progress, Shari'ati indicated that *rowshanfekrân* facilitate further political and economic dependency towards Western imperialism.³⁷

Shari'ati believed that the return to an Islamic culture is the key towards rediscovering ourselves. Here he makes sure that his reader understands the difference between an ideological Islam (will be discussed) and the superficial and sanitized Islam that is common and prevalent in most Islamic countries of today.³⁸ Therefore, he stated, to be involved in political struggle is the most important characteristic of an individual's self-construction, and that social struggle is one's self-awareness. It is also by way of political struggle that a *rowshanfekr* can practice his Islamic ideology and learn to communicate with the masses that have a deep inclination towards their religion. Shari'ati, furthermore,

advised his readers and audiences, that without understanding the masses, a *rowshanfekr* not only is isolated, but will also create a wall that separates him from the rest of the population. Here, he tried to convey to his readers and audiences that the reason why the clerics' had the ability and easy access to communicate with the masses via mosques and religious gatherings, was because of peoples' feeling and conviction towards Islam. The university-educated are more concerned with theory and western-oriented ideologies and neglect their responsibility to introduce social-awareness into the society, assuming that rejecting Islam and embracing Western thoughts are what the masses desire. In short they sympathize in theory, however, in practice, they are a world apart.³⁹

From Where Shall We Begin? (Az Kojâ Aghâz Koneim?)

The most important aspect of how "we begin," according to Shari'ati, was to make a separation between the genuine *rowshanfekr* and the pseudo *rowshanfekr*. The pseudo *rowshanfekr* usually follows the lead of Western intellectuals, who in the course of 17th, 18th, and the 19th centuries had challenged the hegemony of church and state over the masses, the economy, politics and scientific inquiries. The challenges that faced Western intellectuals were the products of their own historical, social and economic peculiarities. Therefore, they observed and analyzed the problems and managed to alter or find solutions that brought about political, social and economic changes for their

society. Shari'ati claimed that following the leads of Western intellectuals would automatically force the pseudo *rowshanfekr* to apply the same methods and ideologies of Western counterparts onto his own society, that had naturally gone through dissimilar historical, social and economic phases. In doing so, he would obviously alienate himself from his own culture, history and social environment.⁴⁰

In order to clarify his point of view, Shari'ati argued that sometimes a person's Western education may be irrelevant to the problems of traditional Islamic communities and that by implementing ideas that have no historical roots in a society, only frustration and failure may ensue. He posed the example of the well-known French philosopher, Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980), undoubtedly an intellectual in his country as well as in the West. The question was, will he still be an intellectual in Africa, Asia, or Latin America, where people suffer from industrial backwardness, hunger, ignorance and total poverty, not from material consumption, immorality and economic injustice, the common factors that preoccupy Western intellectuals?⁴¹ Although, Sartre's intentions and efforts may have been sincere, they could not be productive since his contemplated issues were totally irrelevant to the non-Western societies, even though that was his aim. Hence, Shari'ati stated, it is of the utmost importance for the pseudo *rowshanfekr* to realize that ideologies are not just like the imported electrical contraptions that you can plug in to activate. Hoping that imported ideologies can reshape a traditional society's culture and civilization is a mere fantasy. He furthermore argued that in order to find out what makes a backward society into a

very powerful one, one should study, comprehend and analyze the birth and development of a civilization, as well as its important historical aspects.

According to Shari'ati, a genuine *rowshanfekr* was a person who realized his historical place, was able to communicate with the masses, knew his responsibilities and made sacrifices for the sake of his society.⁴² He also indicated that because of imperialistic domination, the West deliberately discredited and undermined the native Islamic culture, repressed it as backwards and undesirable, and simultaneously elevated its own culture and civilization as that of being superior. Therefore, the Iranian educated class, due to the type of education they received, automatically began to ignore their own Islamic culture and to embrace everything that was western, deeming it as the key to a progressive culture and civilization. This trend, Shari'ati argued, produced a contrariety among the educated class whose education and living conditions were heavily linked to the West, but their cultural surroundings were that of an Iranian-Islamic culture. Shari'ati believed that one ought to discover, challenge, and unravel this contrast in order to be in charge of his society; otherwise, his historical destiny would be shaped and formed by people other than himself. He explained that this contrast is nothing but realization of where we are, who we are, and how we relate to our community, history and religion. If a person recognizes that he not only belongs to, but is also an integral part of that community, then dealing with the contrast would be much easier.⁴³

We should, however, make clear that Shari'ati never rejected the idea of being inspired by or even imitating the West. Nevertheless, he admitted to the dilemma that the educated class was confronted with between Islam and the Eastern culture on one hand, and the West with its ideological and technological advances on the other. What Shari'ati opposed was the form of imitation that the West desired for non-Western societies, blindly accepting everything that was Western. He suggested that an educated person should conscientiously explore the historical processes and conditions that made the West a dominant power, and should also realize that the West with its position of power was a reality that ought to be dealt with and learned from without compromising Islamic culture. Hence, this was not imitation or rejection, it was merely understanding and learning how a backward region managed to become dominant without deviating from its moral values and religious beliefs.⁴⁴

Return to Cultural Self

Shari'ati indicated that since the eighteenth century, the West, for imperialistic reasons and purposes, had been advocating Western culture as the only satisfactory universal culture. One reaction to this type of cultural imperialism, by some non-Western educated, was the return to "self." According to Shari'ati, this idea had become a prevalent meaningless maxim. He argued that "self" is the product of two very important factors; the parental and the cultural. Cultural "self" is the outcome of the historical process and it is authentic

in that it distinguishes between two individuals from different geographical and historical backgrounds, according to their values and beliefs, shaping their human identity.⁴⁵ Hence, ideologies are the creative aspects of each culture, helping it to conform to its norms, values, and religious beliefs. Shari'ati argued that if we remove the creative ability of a culture we automatically take away its political, social and economic competence, leaving nothing but an empty shell.⁴⁶

Shari'ati asserted that if the solution to maintaining our identity is to return to "self," then we should elucidate and ask ourselves to which "self" we ought to return. Here, he is determined to warn his readers and audiences of the danger of returning to racial "self" which would result in the formation of racism, fascism and tribalism. Since his audiences were Iranians, the core of the discussion revolved around returning to Iranian "self." He explained that the Iranians inherited two cultural selves; the ancient/Persian "self" and the Iranian-Islamic "self."⁴⁷ Shari'ati tried to analyze the history of ancient Persia by categorizing it into different periods: Achaemenids, Parthians and Sasanian dynasties, with Zoroastrianism as the dominant religion, causing the formation of the people's moral values, ethics, and beliefs. He explained that the ancient/Persian "self" belongs to the pages of history and is a subject for archeological studies. With the exception of No Rouz (Persian New Year), it is not a living culture and is not relevant for the masses. Its ruin is primarily indicative of a past glorious age in Persian history. He furthermore maintained that this ancient "self" is not deep-rooted within the Iranian society and a *rowshanfekr* could employ it as a leading

factor in moving the populace towards a common goal.⁴⁸ He suggested that the educated class should take up the “self” that is still alive and can play a vital role in transforming the society to a new phase without alienating themselves from the masses through the promotion of imported ideologies that people cannot relate to. Shari’ati referred to this living “self” as the Islamic culture. His choice was not the prevalent form of Islam that exists in Islamic societies today, but rather, a revolutionary Shi’ite form of Islam.⁴⁹

Shari’ati sternly criticized the form of Islam that existed in pre 1979 revolutionary Iran, stating that this brand of Islam was filled with superstitious contents that took away people’s social responsibilities, ideas and constructive thoughts from this world and transferred them to the next. Nevertheless, people were more pre-occupied with the spiritual aspect of Islam rather than its more revolutionary doctrinal outlook. After all, as Shari’ati stated, this form of Islam is the closest “self” that we possess and people can relate to it in spite of it being stationary. It is the task of the *rowshanfekrân* to breathe a new political and social life into it, produce an Islamic ideology that would awaken people to their responsibilities and transfer the society into a viable movement of finding their true identity and at the same time oppose cultural imperialism.⁵⁰

What is to Be Done? (Cheh Bâyard Kard?)

In his lecture series, *bâz gasht beh kodâm-e kheish?* (Return to What Self?), Shari’ati made an analogy about the ideological movements that were

emerging in Iran. He openly attacked the two educated class groups whose inclinations were to either accept and make Western cultural and technological supremacy the role model, or follow the socialist and Marxist ideology of the Soviet Union, China and others. In both cases, it seemed that Islam was rejected for being out of touch with the reality of the world (Western dominant culture) and was even seen as the cause of societal backwardness. It seemed his criticism was less harsh towards the Iranian leftist groups who embraced Socialism and Communism, than for other groups. Perhaps, with them he found some common ground of opposing religious superstitions, colonialism, imperialism, despotism, exploitation and feudalism. However, he could not understand that the search for our true identity through cultural "self" would be difficult enough to have to adopt an ideology that was alien to the masses and even the working class, even though it appeared the message was related to their cause.⁵¹

Shari'ati added that the Iranian educated class did not understand their historical reality. The first theme they should explore, before embracing any Western ideology, was to realize the historical process and social transition that their country was experiencing. Western societies, he argued, had undergone political, social and economic transformation from feudalism to capitalism, to industrialization and Imperialism, to liberalism and democracy; from an agrarian lifestyle to urbanity. On the other hand, Iran was experiencing a bond to an agrarian economy, dictatorial regime and a society where religion still had a profound foundation. Shari'ati elucidated that people in the West truly lived in the

20th century and their intellectuals could easily associate and communicate with the masses. On the contrary, the majority of the Iranian population was illiterate and the educated class was removed from them. Therefore, it would be a critical mistake to adopt and follow Western culture or ideologies that had no historical basis in the Iranian society. Hence, they should follow the common bond that existed between the masses and their cultural heritage; Islam. It, after all, was the same force that confronted Western Imperialism for centuries and saved the country from prolonged colonization.⁵²

Shari'ati believed that before *rowshanfekrân* outlined their ideological convictions or differences, they should agree with the point that as long as people had not obtained their social awareness, any ideological approach or movement, whether Western or not, would meet with failure. It was also imperative that any social or political movement should be placed directly in the hands of the people and they alone should choose their leaders, not the educated class. Finally, despite the rationalistic and scientific belief that was inherent among *rowshanferân*, Shari'ati stated, it is not oppression and poverty that are the cause of political upheaval, it is the awareness by the deprived class of their social conditions and positions that incite them for political, social or economic changes. To make his point on the question of leadership and people's awareness, Shari'ati blamed the failure of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911) on the inability to produce a viable foundation to inform and enlighten the masses.⁵³

Shari'ati stated that *rowshanfekrân* should realize the inevitable reality and historical truth, that Islam has shaped the moral and spiritual beliefs of society. Therefore, what they ought to do is to study Islam and if necessary, create Islamic Protestantism. A reformed Islam/Islamic Protestantism, like the Christian Protestantism, would destroy the corrupt and superstitious aspects of Islam along with conservative clerics, and produce a true Islam where its followers were participants and responsible toward each other in their political, social, and economic affairs.⁵⁴ Shari'ati, furthermore, reiterated that the responsibility of a *rowshanfekr* was to bring about Islamic Protestantism so that it could;

- a. Reinvigorate the national heritage and reexamine the factors that caused Islamic decline.
- b. Discover the social and class contrast, bring them to the surface and educate the masses.
- c. Bridge the gap between him and the masses.
- d. Be able to remove the power of those who wrongly claimed to have legitimacy to religious leadership (conservative) so that he could eliminate any kind of obstacle they might produce.
- e. With a religious Protestantism, be able to restore his cultural "self" and identity in order to stand against Western imperialism.
- f. Be able to defuse the submissive aspect of people's spirit into a productive and objective characteristic.
- g. To resist against Western immorality.
- h. Have an accurate insight of the existing world and how the West was playing a major role.⁵⁵

How Could Islamic Protestantism be Achieved?

Shari'ati had shown his readers and audiences that it was possible for Islamic societies to have an identity and cultural "self" without being inundated by Western political and cultural influence. In order to prepare the Iranian society for Islamic Protestantism he adopted *Hoseiniyeh Ershâd's* program as an ideal draft that could eventually be implemented throughout the nation.⁵⁶ *Hoseiniyeh*

Ershâd's program consisted of four main organizations:

1. **Research Division, composed of six research groups.**
 - a. Islamology
 - b. History
 - c. Islamic culture and sciences
 - d. Social sciences
 - e. Islamic countries
 - e. Arts and letters

2. **Instructional Division composed of five instructional groups.**
 - a. Islamology
 - b. Qur'anic teaching (from a scientific perspective)
 - c. Missionary training
 - d. Arts and letters
 - e. Arabic and English languages and literatures

3. **Promotional Division**
 - a. Sermons and religious lectures
 - b. Scientific conferences
 - c. Seminars, conventions, and objective interview

4. **Bureaus**
 - a. Publications
 - b. Printing press
 - c. Translation
 - d. Hajj (pilgrimage), rites and observances
 - e. Book, documents, and statistics centers
 - f. Book mobiles
 - g. Press⁵⁷

The above is merely an outline, however, Shari'ati explained the task of each organization in great detail. The purpose of an outline was not to demonstrate how Shari'ati was going to single-handedly revive an Islamic cultural self to his society, but rather, it was to illustrate that the foundation of an Islamic institution (Hoseiniyeh Ershâd) had already been laid. It only needed charismatic *rowshanfekrân* and leadership to boost and enhance its achievements and make its curriculum more appealing to the younger generation. He also had in mind a free Islamic university where students and teachers would work equally to devise their own curriculum and participate in teaching, as well.⁵⁸ There still remained one unanswered question; how could such an immense project get off the ground? What about its human resources, its financial adequacy, its venues, logistical and other unforeseen problems that might arise along the way? Shari'ati did not have a magical formula to present to his people. However, his suggestion was to stimulate further scientific Islamic activities in the existing places, such as Mosques, religious theaters dedicated for specific religious sermons and lectures and private and public religious conventions. Financially, he relied on religious endowments, charity, and benevolent individuals, particularly from the bazaar merchants whose dedication to Islam was undeniable.⁵⁹

Chapter Two

An Ideal Islamic Society and Divinely Inspired Leadership (Ummat va Imâmate)

As previously discussed, Ali Shari'ati prescribed that returning to Iranian-Islamic "self" was the key to attaining Iranian identity and achieving cultural independence. However, the suggested Islamic-Iranian "self" intertwined very much with the Shi'ite form of Islam, differing from the Sunni mode of Islam. Therefore, a brief sketch of the history of Shi'ism and its rise as the State religion of Iran will clarify and shed light on many of Shari'ati's views that helped to develop his ideology of the ideal society and divinely inspired leadership.

The origin of Shi'ism, however, can be traced to the question of succession after the Prophet's death. Out of the several groups that contended to succeed him as the new leader of the Muslim community, one in particular, advocated the candidacy of Ali ibn Abi Tâlib (d. 661), the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, as the legitimate successor (*Khalifah* or caliph) to not the prophethood, but to prophet Muhammad's temporal authority. This group was known as the "partisan of Ali" (*Shi'ite Ali*.) In due time, Ali became the fourth orthodox caliph and with his death ended the period of *al-Khulafa al-Râshidun* (rightly guided caliphs.) It was this early political friction, enriched with the ideologies of *shaheed* (martyrdom) and *Mahdi* (messiah) and the doctrine of *Imâmate* that split Islam permanently into two different camps, that of Shi'ites and Sunnis.

With the rise of a new dynasty, Umayyad (661-750), whom the Shi'ite never accepted as leader and legitimate government, invited Ali's son Husayn to the city of Kufa, a Shi'ite stronghold, to claim the true leadership of the Muslim community. Swift action on the part of the Umayyad government resulted in the death of Husayn and his small band of followers, mostly members of his family, at Karbalâ, near Kufa, in 680.¹ This event however, did not mark the end of the Shi'ite claim for leadership. Indeed, it strengthened their solidarity and triggered a series of revolts against the Umayyad government.

Unlike the Sunnis who were loyal to the empowered caliphs, the Shi'ites never relinquished their allegiance to Ali and his descendants, called *Imâms*, as the rightful heirs to the Prophet. Hence, the legitimate government belonged to the *Imâms* and all other governments, including all Sunni caliphs, were regarded as usurpers. It is nonetheless, important to note that Shi'ism, like any other religion was eventually divided into several sects. The development of a distinctive doctrine and a distinctive system of jurisprudence of the Ithnâ Ashari or Twelver Shi'ism who believe that the twelfth *Imâm* (Muhammad al-Muntazar) went into occultation around the year 878 and would one day return as the messiah, is the dominant form of Shi'ism of today's Iran, formed around the eighth century under the auspices of Husayn's grandson and great-grandson Muhammad al-Bâqir (d.733) and Ja'afr al-Sâdiq (d.765), better known as the fifth and the sixth *Imâms*. Although the *Imâms* resided primarily in the city of Medina, until the eighth century, the city of Kufa remained an important intellectual and support center for Shi'ism. It was due to the animosity of the early leaders of the

Abbasid Dynasty (750-1258) towards Imâmî Shi'ism that the core of supporters moved from Kufa to Qum. It was also in Qum that great theologians like Muhammad al Kulayni (d.940) and Muhammad Ibn Bâbûya (d.991) laid the basic groundwork for the Imâmî doctrine. In his *Usûl al-Kâfi*, Kulayni argued that *imân* (faith), *'aql* (reason), and *'ilm* (knowledge) are connected with salvation. *Imân* (faith), especially, plays a major role in Imâmî inner-worldly devotion and brotherly love towards the community. It is regarded equal to true religion, in this case Shi'ism, is also the highest form of religious consciousness and the most conducive towards salvation.²

Historically, the Imâmî Shi'i's proselytizing activity was confined to a specific geographical locality. However, with the advent of the Buyid dynasty (945-1055) their activity expanded throughout the Buyid Empire. This period also witnessed further doctrinal development of Imâmî Shi'ism in the field of *Kalâm* (rational theology) and the principal of jurisprudence throughout the corpus of literature that theologians like al-Mufid (d.1022), al-Murtadâ (d.1044), and al-Tûsî (d.1067) produced.³ However, it was not until the rise of the Safavid dynasty (1500-1736) that Ithnâ Ashari (Twelver) Shi'ism found the support of a government that recognized its existence being intertwined with Twelver Shi'ism. Declaring Shi'ism as the religion of the empire, Safavid rulers saw the forced conversion of the population to Ithnâ Ashari Shi'ism as their primary responsibility. With the elevation of Ithnâ Ashari Shi'ism as the national religion of Persia, a new era commenced within the Safavid dynasty, which not only influenced the culture and history of the Iranian people but also provided a very

important political and social place for the Shi'ite Ulama (religious scholars.) The Ulama had religious authority over the state until the Pahlavi dynasty (1921-1979), and again, after the 1979 Revolution.

In summary, the Ithnâ Ashari Shi'ite doctrine contains: a) the doctrine of the *Imâmate*, b) the doctrine of *ijtihâd* (the right to interpret the Qur'an and the Hadith), and c) the doctrine of *taqlid* (imitation). As mentioned earlier, according to the doctrine of *Imamate*, after Ali, his direct male descendants for twelve generations would lead the Muslim community on the same true path as their ancestor, prophet Muhammad. However, the twelfth *Imâm* is in the state of occultation until his return when he will conquer the world and restore, once again, the true form of Islam. The doctrine of *Imâmate* naturally leads us to the second important Shi'ite ideology, the doctrine of *ijihâd* (the right to interpret the tenets of the faith.) According to Shi'ite belief, when the twelfth *Imâm* went into occultation his followers would know his aspiration through the *mujtahids* (a religious spokesman and interpreter), however in reality, a *mujtahid* is the spokesman of the *Imâm*. No one appoints or elects a *mujtahid*, he is merely acknowledged as such because of his intelligence, faith, justice and experience. The doctrine of *taqlid* (imitation) gives a practical importance to the doctrine of *ijtihâd*. According to Shi'ite theology, every believer ought to choose a living *mujtahid* for the matters of religious practice. Some *mujtahids* might have hundreds of followers and some may have millions of followers. It is, however, important to point out that a *mujtahid's* opinion in matters of faith, without proof, is not at all valid.⁴ The purpose of this chapter is not to trace or delve into the

historical development of Shi'ite Islam. The purpose is to simply observe and analyze how Shari'ati perceived Shi'ism as the heir to the revolutionary Islam that was envisioned by prophet Muhammad, thus revealing Shari'ati's views on Ummat (an Ideal Islamic Society) and *Imâmât* (Divinely Inspired Leadership.)

An Ideal Islamic Society (Ummat)

The term Ummat (Arabic Ummah) is derived from the Arabic word Umm meaning path, departure, to intend to leave, pilgrimage and moving forward. It is particularly applicable to a straight, clear, strong path. Shari'ati described Ummat as a society/community wherein its members consciously and willingly travel a path that leads to a common goal, much like a caravan looking for its destination.⁵ Shari'ati emphasized that the common goal is not one of materialistic and superficial happiness, rather an ideal aspiration that gives confidence to the members of the community in order to "become better." In other words:

An Ummat composed of individuals with mutual thoughts, paths, paces, and goals that all share a sense of responsibility and are moving toward a single, shared, direct, known, and consistent destination.⁶

In describing Ummat, Shari'ati believed that Islam did not purposely associate with selective sociological terms such as, society, nation, tribe, race, masses, or people where membership was based upon ethnic, birth, social, or cultural affiliation.⁷ Islam intentionally chose the word Ummat to indicate a movement that had a permanent and specific direction for human groupings. He furthermore stated that in Islam, all terminologies that are descriptors of the Islamic religion, such as, *maddhab, selak, shari'at, tariqat, sabil, and sarât* are

words meaning path.⁸ Ummat, he argued, was based on the three important factors of "commitment," "dynamism," and "evolution," signifying the constant movement of people in the direction of "becoming" rather than "being."⁹ Shari'ati explained that if the goal was "becoming," then it automatically necessitated having a leader (*Imâm*) to steer the Ummat towards the right path, especially when it may be threatened by stagnation and residual on one hand, or superficial happiness that may replace betterment and perfection on the other hand. He warned that such a leader (*Imâm*) should not be worshipped or put above everything else, as in Fascist ideology. Rather, he should be a knowledgeable equal, whose task is to remind followers of their ultimate goal of commitment, dynamism and evolution.¹⁰ It is true that Shari'ati prescribed the need for leadership as a vital component of Ummat, but also reminded people of their social and political responsibilities. He asserted that if Ummat deviated from its vigor, or became stagnant in the light of any internal contradiction, corruption, or outside influence, it would definitely collapse. Therefore, it was the responsibility of the members to safeguard Ummat from these adversities and lay no blame on others for the misfortunes that might trouble them. Here, Shari'ati relied on this Qur'anic verse to remind followers of their responsibility toward their Ummat:

Those were the Ummat who passed away.
 Theirs the reward for what they did, as yours
 will be for what you do.
 You will not be questioned about their deeds.¹¹

As Shari'ati indicated, the apparent message from this verse was that people are responsible for their socio-political and economic actions and should

not blame previous generations for their miseries. He furthermore explained that the economic, political and social malaise of our society was the result of our own apathy and lack of direct involvement in political and economic affairs, not the fault of others. In particular, he was referring to the economic and political hegemony commenced over Iran by Britain and the United States indirectly through the Shah's policies. He furthermore argued that if the members of the Ummat were aware of their socio-political situations and kept in mind their basic ideology of betterment in their society, nothing could deter or sabotage their objectives and goals.

What Shari'ati described thus far on the subject of Ummat was primarily done to illustrate its conceptual significance. However, he desired to see the realistic aspect of an Islamic society capable of achieving a goal that would pave the way to the improvement of their situation. He suggested that Shi'ism, heir to true Islam, was the only vehicle capable of transferring the Islamic societies into revolutionary movements that would gradually establish an Islamic Ummat. It was at this point that he looked at Ummat from an ideologue viewpoint and referred to it not as an ideal society, as suggested earlier, but a *hezb* (political party) that Shi'ism, at the forefront, possessed all elements of being one.

Subsequently Shari'ati took his readers and audiences through an extensively explicit definition for *hezb*. The best definition described *hezb* (political party) as "a social organization possessing world-view, ideology, philosophy of history, an ideal social discipline, class base, class propensity, social leadership, political philosophy, political direction, tradition, motto, strategy, campaign tactics and

ideal that is determined to change the existing situation in an individual, society, or in a specific class and replace it with a better one."¹² He furthermore stated that a political party's goal is to improve the social, economic and political state of affairs of its constituents (deprived class.) To challenge the establishment, whose aim is to maintain the status quo, should be the primary objective of such an organization. One should, however, recognize that Shari'ati's description and definition of a political party ought to be understood within the Iranian political framework, not the democratic societies of the West. Since the social and political organizational skills of a deprived class had not been developed, he argued that the only institution that lived within the heart of the communities and understood their agony was religion. It was through religion and its organization that people would be gradually mobilized and prepared in a uniform way to one day challenge oppressive authority.

To Shari'ati, God's intention of revealing Islam to prophet Muhammad was not just to create another monotheistic society, but, rather to form a unique society that could be a paradigm for others to follow. He relied on the following Qura'nic verse to demonstrate the uniqueness of Islam as a universal religion.

We have made you a temperate people [Ummat] that you act as witness over man, and the Prophet as witness over you.¹³

Shari'ati once again disclosed to his readers and audiences that the word Ummat in this Qur'anic verse was clearly indicative of a *hezb* (political party), rather than an ideal society. Its mission was not its own completion, but a "universal obligation" with regard to other religions. It was within the framework of this verse that Shari'ati asserted that Islam was referred to as a "temperate Ummat"

it did not belong to either "East" or "West." Its place was in the "middle" so that it could influence and help others. Without being impartial in the affairs of others, the responsibility of Islam, therefore, was to break away from any confinement or isolation, to assist the oppressed masses, and to lead followers in a universal revolutionary movement to gain rights and reach the ultimate goal, "to become better" human beings.¹⁴ Shari'ati furthermore maintained that in an Islamic Ummat there is no particular "order," "official groups," or "certain group of people chosen by virtue of their age," designated as the vanguards. Everyone should be an activist and responsible for the liberation of the Ummat and humanity in general.¹⁵

To supplement his view, Shari'ati was determined to establish the notion that prophet Muhammad, therefore, was chosen by God not just to guide an Islamic Ummat, but, also to lead all humanity to salvation. His referral to the following Qur'anic verses is a perfect reinforcement of his observation on the purpose of the creation of Islam, its leadership, and universal responsibility.

We have sent you only as a bearer of good tidings and admonisher for all mankind; yet most people do not understand.¹⁶

Yet there are among those We have created people [Ummat] who led (others) to the truth, and act justly in its light.¹⁷

The first intent of this Ummat, Shari'ati claimed, was to lead and enlighten others toward a universal justice, beneficial to all. This responsibility would give Islam an important place in history and a mission accountable to a global community. Shari'ati's referral to the following verse was also the best description of how an

Ummat could achieve that goal by depending on the principle of "admonition to do good deeds and the prohibition against performing bad deeds."

Of all communities raised among men you are the best. You enjoin right conduct and forbid indecency, and believing in God.¹⁸

It is interesting to see that Shari'ati purposely gave the above principles a high priority, and considered the belief in God to be secondary to the other two principles. He looked at the order of the above verse to prove that faith in God was the utmost important aspect of a religion, however, without commitment and responsibility, "*amr-e be Ma'roof va Nahy-e be monker*" (admonition to do good deeds and the prohibition against performing bad deeds), faith would be superficial.¹⁹ Therefore, a true Muslim ought to satisfy the first two principles within the realm of thoughts, speech and deeds, and then fulfill faith in God as the next order of importance in their lives.²⁰ Putting the above thought in this order of significance also allowed for a common ground with other religions, since every monotheistic religion emphasizes good deeds and prohibits people from evil-doing. This elevated Islam to a responsible global party that has commitment and responsibility to people (human community as a whole) first, with faith in God, next. Secondly, he was determined to challenge the Iranian traditional clerics who paid little attention to "admonition to do good deeds and the prohibition against performing bad deeds" so that they practically disappeared from religious textbooks.

To those who deny the signs of God, and slay the apostles unjustly, and slay the upholders of justice, give news of painful punishment.²¹

Shari'ati argued that God proposed the same painful punishment for those who committed the above transgressions. Hence, he put "the signs of God," "slay

of the apostles," and "the upholders (al-Naas, people) of justice" in the same echelon. All three strived for the same identical cause, "people." He also concluded from the above verse that it was a group struggle for justice and that peoples' effort in upholding justice was the continuation of the prophets' venture and that slaying the unjust was the main aim of the enemy of the apostles, as well as God.²²

Divinely Inspired Leadership (*Imâmate*)

Shari'ati realized that when dealing with the Iranian political nature he must first approach the task in the role of a teacher, conveying to his readers and audiences very carefully the political dilemma that they were faced with. Then as an ideologue, he should introduce a type of solution that would manifest itself in the nature of a new leadership, to deal with political and economic predicaments. One can say that this was an idea that he nurtured from the onset of his Islamic awareness. Therefore, in describing *Imâmate* Shari'ati began to illustrate at least three different types of leaderships that have existed in human history at one time or another; a) Leadership and Dictatorship, in which the leader claims the role of patriarchal headship and is determined to hold onto power in whatever ways necessary, b) Leadership that is the result of heroism, in which people believe that they can achieve their objective if they follow a particular charismatic person who easily occupies the role of national, racial, or religious hero, and c) A type of leadership that is able to fulfill the wishes of all people and lead towards an ideal human being. He explained that this kind of leadership had emerged, for a short

period of time, in Ali's *Imāmate* after the death of caliph Uthman. It was Ali's virtue and excellence, Shari'ati claimed, that appealed to most of his followers, not his relationship to the Prophet, as some Shi'ites believed.²³ Thus, the most essential part of the leadership of the Ummat is first and foremost to be acquainted with the character and qualifications of that leader, otherwise, Shari'ati asserted, people would be lost and confused. He furthermore divided Ali's life and career into three different periods: twenty-three years of commitment to the service of the mission of the Prophet, twenty-five years of endurance for unity in a time when existing order was challenged by widespread rebellion, and finally, five years for the struggle for justice.

Shari'ati, in his several lectures on the *Imāmate* of Ali, attempted to elevate the historical role of Ali, not just as a Shi'ite *Imām*, but also into a unifying factor among all Muslims, regardless of their *maddhabs* (juridical rite to which a Sunni Muslim may adhere) affiliations or role. He gave the historical accounts of how Ali agreed to the accession of Abu Bakr to the caliphate after the Prophet's death, despite his followers' advice to challenge this decision. Shari'ati interpreted Ali's silence not as a sign of submission, but as an indication of unity. Ali realized that opposing Abu Bakr would only precipitate the weakness of the fragile Muslim community rather than build its strength. Consequently, Ali chose that the unity of Muslims could only be preserved if the diverse Muslim groups cooperate and maintain harmonious relations amongst themselves. Hence, Muslim unity was more imperative to Ali than his personal objective.²⁴ Shari'ati equated Ali's sacrifice for the unity of his community as a prime example to all

Muslims to put aside their religious differences and unite against their common enemy, the foreign powers that were advocating that Islam was an expansionist religion and its foundation was based upon swords.²⁵ After all, he stressed, Muslims are the arms of the same body and brothers of the same family, so why the friction and disunity?²⁶ He even referred to the following Qur'anic verse to prove that there should be solidarity among all Muslims.

So let there be a body among you who may call to the good, admonition to do good deeds and the prohibition against performing bad deeds. They are those who are successful.²⁷

After Ali's death in 661 C.E., his followers in the city of Kufa, Iraq, gave their allegiances to his elder son Hasan, as the new caliph. To Iraqis, Hasan was the only person worthy of leading the community with a true religious foundation. His acclamation as caliph naturally alarmed Mu'awiya, governor of Syria, who also challenged Ali's legitimacy to caliphate, since he had also been working very hard for the same office since the time of the third caliph, Uthman. With a strong army at his disposal, Mu'awiya challenged Hasan to a war. The showdown between the two adversaries gave way to troops of Hasan rebelling against him, forcing him to renounce his caliphate and provide for a victory in favor of Mu'awiya. The Shi'ites political activities were based largely underground during the nineteen-year period of Hasan's abdication, death, and during the caliphate of Mu'awiya. However, Mu'awiya's death in 680 and the succession of his son Yazid, gave new breath to their political activities and claim to the caliphate. The Shi'ites of Kufa enthusiastically supported Hasan's younger brother, Husayn. They sent out numerous letters and a series of messengers urging him to come to Kufa since he was the only *Imām*.

It was Husayn's claim to *Imāmate* that became the focal point of Shari'ati's numerous lectures and discussions. In his works he laid down what qualifications a true *Imām*, worthy of continuing the legacy of a genuine and revolutionary Islam of the Prophet, ought to possess. He asserted that prophet Muhammad endeavored to replace tribal allegiances and the brotherhood based on blood-ties with an Islamic ideology that had its foundation in humanistic belief.²⁸ Yet, the caliphate of Mu'awiya and his successor proved that the old tribal affiliation and oligarchy of the old Meccan society were more important than the Islamic ideology of egalitarianism that had been established by the Prophet. Therefore, Husayn's claim to caliphate would force him to be the heir to the struggle that began with prophet Muhammad and continued with his father, Ali, and his brother Hasan. Because the fabric of society had become corrupt, a special effort was needed to right the wrongs, Shari'ati wrote.²⁹ He also indicated that in order to understand the magnitude of Husayn's struggle, one ought first to understand the prevalent political situations of the time, primarily the domination of the Umayyad family. Its members were determined to cling to power through any available means. They would even resort to committing crimes or distorting Islam, all in the name of politics. Hence, Shari'ati stated that Husayn was well aware of the Umayyad's fortitude in eliminating opposition to their political supremacy. Regardless of the political reality of the time, Husayn accepted his follower's invitation and departed toward Kufa.

Husayn's Revolution

Shari'ati's analysis of Husayn's departure to Kufa determined that it was not an attempt to go against the establishment; rather it demonstrated that Husayn deliberately gave a positive response to his followers, fully aware that his attempt to restore the revolutionary Islam of the Prophet would fail. One of the questions that Shari'ati posed was what motivates a person to take on a challenge that was destined from the beginning to fail.³⁰ Shari'ati, at this point, took his audiences and readers through historical documents that detail Husayn's attempt to restore the legitimacy of the leadership (*Imâmate*) to his family and show that from the very beginning there was a plan for a complete revolution in the religious consciousness of Muslims. As these sources are examined, it becomes very obvious that all of Husayn's actions indicated his knowledge of the fact that a victory achieved through military strength would always be temporal, since a stronger power could always bring it down. Yet, a victory achieved through suffering and sacrifice would be everlasting and leaves permanent imprints on man's consciousness.³¹

Shari'ati stated that Husayn's revolution was, perhaps, set in motion with the subsequent letter that his followers dispatched to him.

We thank God for casting down the tyrannical rule of your enemy, who had usurped the power to rule his community without any right, allowed the possession of God to pass into the hands of the powerful and the rich, ...If we hear set in motion that you are coming to us, we will oust the governor from our city. Peace and mercy of God be upon you.³²

He furthermore asserted that there was no evidence whatsoever that Husayn, while in Mecca, tried to recruit active supporters or publicize his cause amongst the great number of people who were performing the annual Hajj. Nor did he send emissaries to different parts of the Islamic world, even the provinces where he had great numbers of sympathizers, to stir up a rebellion or gather followers, as some members of his own family had advised him. Hence, Shari'ati argued, Husayn's actions proved that his aim, from the beginning to end, had a much higher goal than merely succession to the caliphate.³³ To support his argument, Shari'ati examined Husayn's response to another delegation that accompanied a letter signed by the heads of the Kufan Shi'ites;

From Husayn b. Ali to the believers and the Muslims. Hâni and Sa'id [heads of the delegation] came to me with your letters,... I have understood what you said And that you have invited me to come to you because you have no *imâm* to guide you,... But you must be clear about the fact that the *imâm* is only one who follows the Book of God, makes justice and honesty his conduct and behavior, judges with truth, and devotes himself to the service of God. Peace.³⁴

Shari'ati argued that it was the last sentence of this letter that described the true nature of *Imâm* and the position of *Imâm* within the wider Islamic community that would help to comprehend how Husayn perceived the whole problem of Islamic leadership. It is interesting, at this point, to examine another letter that Husayn wrote to his followers, wherein Shari'ati analyzed it without giving the full contents of it to his readers and audiences.

God has chosen Muhammad from among his people, graced him with His Prophethood and selected him for His message.... We being his family (ahl), his close associates endowed with the quality of guardianship (awliya), his trustees and vice regent (awsiyâ), and his heir and legatee (wraith), are the most deserving among all the people to take his place. We became contented, disliking dissension and anxious to preserve the peace and well-being [of the community].³⁵

According to Shari'ati, Husayn, in his letters, explained the right to custodianship of the community as a God-given right to the family of the Prophet and they alone could restore the true Islam. Hence, Husayn saw himself as the true heir to the Prophet's legacy, he who created an Ummat where justice, honesty, truth, and service to God and the people were its foundation.³⁶

He furthermore asserted that the factors motivating Husayn to respond to the call of his followers were two-fold. Being the grandson of the founder of Islam, he was obligated to reply to the repeated appeals of his followers. Secondly, it was the last opportunity to change the course of the caliphate from oligarchy of the Umayyad to the divine justice.³⁷ Meanwhile, caliph Yazid, no longer trusting his weak governor in Kufa, appointed his strong man Ubayd Allah b. Ziyâd. The new governor's immediate task was to overpower the Shi'ite opposition by taking whatever measures were required for this purpose. Within a short period of time, Ziyâd managed to placate any kind of resistance by the followers of Husayn to the caliphate of Yazid. In order to prevent a renewed attempt by Husayn or his followers to stir up further opposition, Ibn Ziyâd blockaded all the roads leading from Mecca to Kufa and gave strict orders forbidding anyone from entering or leaving the territory of Kufa. Shari'ati explained that the news of this event reached Husayn, who was already on his way to Kufa, and in spite of all advice, he did not abandon his project, although he was fully aware and prepared for what would happen to him.³⁸ Shari'ati furthermore argued that if Husayn's intentions were not to sacrifice himself for the sake of true Islam, he would not have warned those accompanying him of the

unhappy news, danger and complete destruction for which he was heading.³⁹ He asked them to leave him and seek safety.

Shari'ati stated that, at this point, Husayn was determined to meet his historical destiny and realized that the reactionary forces of Yazid, representing the pre Islamic conservatism, had mobilized themselves and re-emerged with full vigor. Yazid's force was powerful enough to suppress and deface what prophet Muhammad had accomplished in his lifetime. Therefore, Husayn realized that giving allegiances to Yazid would not be a political arrangement, as was the case with his brother Hasan and Mu'awiya, but an endorsement of Yazid's character and way of life. Shari'ati stated that it would be unthinkable for Husayn, who was brought up in the lap of the Prophet and inherited his devotion and justice, to make a compromise with one who had betrayed the true Islam.⁴⁰ Shari'ati also indicated that Husayn's strategy from the onset was to awaken the consciousness of Muslims. Otherwise, he could have easily sneaked out of Mecca and secretly arrived in Kufa and with the support of his followers, challenged Yazid and overthrow his caliphate.⁴¹ Husayn, therefore, decided that gaining the support of Muslims and restoring the true Islam could only be achieved through sacrifice, suffering and if necessary, death. Consciously embracing death for a cause that would restore divine justice is not something new in history. However, its impact was immortalized as part of Shi'ite doctrinal ideals, being revered as the martyrdom of *Imâm* Husayn.

Shari'ati argued that one should realize the magnitude of Husayn's sacrifice for the cause of true Islam within the episode of Karbalâ, where Husayn

and his close companions, who had remained loyal to the cause, gave their lives to the forces of the Yazid's on September 10, 680. He asserted that in Shi'ite belief this historical tragedy lost its true revolutionary importance and unfortunately became an empty shell without understanding of its true sense and was used only for religious leaders and the masses to practice mourning. By the same token, Shari'ati wrote that some Islamic scholars have referred to this tragedy within the framework of Shi'ite historical revolts and uprisings against established regimes, rather than as an Islamic event that challenged the corrupt Umayyad government, putting into place a righteous government set up by the Prophet.⁴²

Shari'ati also demonstrated to his readers and audiences that martyrdom had a special place in the minds of the Iranian people and played a significant role in Shi'ite ideology. He gave several meanings for *shaheed* (martyr) such as; present, observer, to bear witness, bearer of good news, to be aware, a person that every one looks up to, and finally a model and an example.⁴³ Hence, martyrdom should not be interpreted as a war or struggle, but as a divine mission. It is a mission that follows when Jihād (struggle against ungodliness forces, wrongly known as Holy War) fails.⁴⁴ He, moreover, stated that when a doctrine or an idea that is very imperative to a society falls into obscurity and is forgotten, then, one should be determined to make sacrifices in order to bring to light the forgotten inspiration. Therefore, that person transfers his physical being into the thoughts of people and is not dead and lives within our minds and our hearts. Thus, Husayn chose martyrdom as a goal for a higher purpose, especially when

he realized that the minds and the hearts of Muslims could not be conquered through military means. He then decided to sacrifice himself for the cause of divine justice that had been bequeathed to the Prophet.⁴⁵ To some extent, he even equated Husayn's actions to the great sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the redemption of mankind.

Once again, Shari'ati made reference to the aforementioned Qur'anic verse, 2:143, in order to strengthen his case that in order to become a *shaheed* for a cause, it is not always necessary for a person to give up his physical being. He suggested that *shaheed*, in this particular verse, means to bear witness to something that has been forgotten and was now brought back to light. For this reason, Shari'ati wrote that Husayn, whose actions and deeds in both public and private matters became an example for Muslims to follow, had become a model (another meaning that he gives for *shaheed*), like prophet Muhammad, for all to follow.⁴⁶ He also stated that Husayn's action from the moment that he refused to acknowledge the caliphate of Yazid should be looked at as the beginning of martyrdom because he realized that there was no hope for the revival of true Islam, unless, like his grandfather, he became a paradigm for people to recognize that sacrifice ought to be made if the aim was for the well-being of others.

Perspectives For an Ideal Leadership and Society

In continuing his discussion on Shi'ism, Shari'ati indicated that after the occultation of the twelfth *Imâm* in 878, who was also known as the *Muntazar* (awaited) *Imâm*, a return would usher in the era of the true Islam of the Prophet,

with the end of the world arriving shortly thereafter. Nonetheless, during his absence, the qualified religious scholars would guide the Shi'ite community. However, it is essential to point out that there are two fundamental principles in the Shi'ite's doctrine that must be followed in order to choose a leader. The first is that *Imâm* is a prerogative bestowed upon a chosen person by God, from the family of the Prophet, who before his death and with the guidance of God, would transfer the *Imâm* to another through explicit designation. Hence, the *Imâm* is restricted to a definite individual among all the descendents of Ali and Fâtima as mentioned above. The second fundamental principle is that of *'ilm* (knowledge.) This means that an *Imâm* is a divinely inspired person who possesses a special religious knowledge that can be passed on to a successor before his death. Therefore, the new *Imâm* becomes the sole authoritative source of knowledge in religious affairs and without it, no one would be able to find the correct path of Islam. This knowledge is contained in both the external and the esoteric meanings of the Qur'an. Hence, in an attempt to guide and direct the Shi'ite community, it is virtually impossible to find a religious scholar who would possess the above-mentioned principles. Thus, questions remain as to who is qualified to perform the mission of *Imâm* in his absence.

Shari'ati deviated from the traditional Shi'ite norms by stating that the religious leader of the Shi'ites should not always be a member of the clergy class and enumerated several qualifications that ought to be inherent in a person to be considered as the leader. First and foremost, this person had to be extremely knowledgeable in every aspect of Qur'anic learning. Secondly, this person had to

be an authority on prophet Muhammad's life, mission, Hadith, and Sunna.

Thirdly, he should be remarkably well informed about the lives and characteristics of the companions to the Prophet and the *Imāms* and, finally, he must be an authority in Islamic culture with expertise in an area of Islamic studies such as; Islamic philosophy, Islamic history, or the science of jurisprudence.⁴⁷ He intentionally chose these qualifications to prove to the clergy class that the key to religious leadership does not come from the cities of Qum or Najaf, even though these cities, with their religious seminaries, played a major role in the development of the Shi'ite doctrine and ideology. In short, Shari'ati's aim was to detach the Safavid Shi'ism produced in the sixteenth century and replaces it with an authentic Shi'ism. Safavid Shi'ism had given total authority to the clergy class and made them state sponsored religious leaders who, for all practical purposes, had renounced their real role as the awakeners of the public. Shari'ati, on the other hand, believed that the Alid Shi'ism, from Ali the first *Imām*, was the true heir to the true Islam, for it had never given up the responsibility of continuing the revolutionary aspects of Islam, nor of the Prophet.⁴⁸

Shari'ati's plan was to establish the notion that race, economic prosperity, political affiliation and membership within a specific class should not be the criteria for acceptance or elimination of a qualified individual, but rather, it is one's merit that should determine who is worthy to lead the community. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Shari'ati laid down the foundation for an Islamic educational system that should be based upon the *Hoseiniyeh Ershād* program. He hoped that Iranians would become increasingly conscious of their political and

economic state of affairs and initiate an Islamic revolution to replace the existing political system. He was well aware of this grave task and knew that the answers to the persistent problems of Iran would not come easily. He mentioned several problems that had to be addressed in order to achieve the ultimate goal of creating an ideal society, not only for Iranians, but also as a model for the rest of the Islamic world to follow. He elucidated that if such a revolution took place, the major issue facing people would be the matter of leadership, both for the revolution and the political system that would ensue. Shari'ati explained that first, we must recognize the three distinctive features of a revolution before we can discuss the future political system. These features were: a) Ideologue of the revolution, b) leadership or the hero of it and, c) the political authority of the revolution.⁴⁹ He described that the ideologue of the revolution could not be elected or selected and that people would believe in him for his genuine thoughts and logical, truthful message. The heroes of the revolution would be the products of different circumstances within the process of the revolution. Therefore, there would always be a possibility that their charisma would weaken as the revolution proceeded. In the matter of political authority, Shari'ati stated that this would depend upon the political order, charter and constitution that would be produced after the revolution.⁵⁰

Thus, Shari'ati stated that the process of electing or selecting a leader was a very complicated and delicate matter that should be analyzed as one would a diamond, keeping in mind its scientific knowledge of composition, its market value in comparison with other precious stones, and its separation from the other

stones in a mine, so too, all matters needed to be researched and studied before attempting to discuss and debate the procedures of selection.⁵¹ He also indicated that at this stage of a revolution, it would be the task of the people to discover and recognize whom the most responsible, worthy and exemplary leader should be. Shari'ati wrote that this could not be achieved unless people were well aware of their political and historical place in history.⁵² This would not be an easy mission. If the society was unaware of its political and religious challenges, it would become static and no matter what type of government was chosen, it would ultimately meet with failure.⁵³ In his book, *Ummat va Imâmât* (An Ideal Islamic Society and Divinely Inspired Leadership) Shari'ati took his readers through lengthy historical examples of different political systems including dictatorships, revolutionary communism, and western democracy. He outright rejected dictatorships and Communism as reactionary forces that prevented people from developing to the level of an ideal human being (*ensân*), a view of Shari'ati to be examined in a later chapter. He went on to say that Communism controlled peoples' freedoms and rejected religion because it supposedly clouded ones thinking. Despite finding fewer flaws, he did not perceive democracy as a complete political system. Shari'ati stated that in democratic societies the foundation of the government is based upon a calm but stagnant prosperity of the people and preservation of the status quo.⁵⁴ Therefore, the aim of each politician is to lead the country by securing a majority of votes. Advocating promises that people want to hear is one way to attract and gain their confidence. Since money is a major issue to their political survival, it also becomes very easy to buy

influence with those politicians. After the election, their promises fall short, the reality of the status quo takes effect, and changes occur very slowly.⁵⁵

Shari'ati did not recommend a democracy, especially in a static society where its concept was unrecognized. He also did not favor a theocracy where superstition was the prevalent form of religion. Rather, he prescribed an Islamic society where the population was "self aware" of its historical place and their thoughts were in tune with their leader, all working harmoniously towards the revival of a true revolutionary Islam, such as that founded by prophet Muhammad in the seventh century. This was the cornerstone for Shari'ati's ideology of an ideal government. He also asserted that such a society needed vigorous programs and a long period of time in order to accomplish their aim.⁵⁶ His works make it clear that his intention was not to advocate a revolution or overthrow a dictatorship. He explicitly wanted to first and foremost, educate, making sure that the younger generation was aware of their Iranian-Islamic cultural identity. His subsequent goal was to then develop a responsible Shi'ite; one who would understand the necessity of a revolution.

Chapter Three

Ali Shari'ati's Perspective on Islam

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 was a turning point, bringing Islam to the core of the Iranian political system. The eventual birth of an Islamic Republic with an Islamic constitution perpetuated the power of the clergy in every social, economic, and political stratum within the country. The events leading up to the revolution that brought down the Pahlavi regime were not religious, as some believe, but rather a fusion and contribution of different movements and factors. The popularization of Islam as a progressive ideology among energetic youth, largely from traditional family backgrounds, owes much to Ali Shari'ati's extensive lectures on a variety of Islamic topics during the 1960s and '70s. He had an enormous impact on furthering the cause of the various Islamic movements of opposition to the secular Iranian government.

Nonetheless, the purpose of this chapter is not to illustrate Shari'ati's ability to spearhead an opposition movement against the establishment, but to take an analytical glance at Shari'ati's perception of how Islam, as an ideology, should be viewed and understood in traditional Islamic societies. The concept of *tawhid* (the absolute oneness of God) will also be given special attention because, in Shari'ati's view, it is the foundation of the Islamic faith.

The Absolute Oneness of God (Tawhid)

In his *Jahân-Bini va Ideology* (World-View and Ideology) Shari'ati elevated *tawhid*, treating it as the basis of a new ideology, as well as deeming it the most important factor in understanding genuine Islam.

In proving the importance of *tawhid*, since his audiences were mostly Iranians, Shari'ati relied on Shi'ism as the center of his debate, rejecting the traditional arrangement of the Articles of Belief in Shi'ism, which commences with the five doctrines of: 1) oneness of God (*tawhid*), 2) justice (*adl*), 3) prophethood (*nabovvat*), 4) divinely inspired leader (*Imâmate*), which is at the center of all political theory, and 5) final judgment (*âkharat*). He theorized that the essential principal of Islam is its foundation, which is *tawhid*, and the other doctrines were derived from *tawhid*. Therefore, it is not proper to equate *tawhid* with other doctrines, placing them side-by-side. Rather, *tawhid* should be regarded as the cornerstone of all beliefs. Hence, the life of an individual and a society, along with human thinking, feeling, deeds, and activities, whether political, economic, scientific, artistic, or literary, or relationships between people, should all be organized with *tawhid* as the base of the structure.¹

From a religio-philosophical point of view, *tawhid* means to believe in the oneness of God (monotheism) and to reject *shirk* (the association of other gods with God, or simply, polytheism). This means that the universe is created by one Creator Who controls it with a rational and absolute will. Shari'ati raised the issue, however, of why it is so important to name Abraham as the founder of the *tawhid* movement and why Prophet Muhammad regarded himself as the

successor of this movement. He noted that one may ask why the prophets in their lifetimes experienced so much hardship and faced so many enemies, when societies would eventually progress in science, philosophy, and other knowledge and thus abandon *shirk* and accept *tawhid*, so that monotheism would be an inevitable reality of human societies.²

Shari'ati stated that the concept of *tawhid* ought to be more important than a simple belief in one god. He clearly indicated, however, that his intention and purpose of discussing and analyzing God was not a philosophical quest for the existence of God, but rather an intent to demonstrate that from a human perspective there was an intellectual and spiritual need to believe in *tawhid*. He contended that there was no simple formula for understanding the social value and historical role of *tawhid* unless we analyze and identify the opposite of *tawhid*, which is *shirk*.³ It is generally recognized that *shirk* arises when divine energies, originally seen as aspects, emanation, or manifestations of the one supreme Deity, take on a life of their own and are worshipped as though they were independent entities. Besides this general definition for *shirk*, Shari'ati also identified elements, such as *jahl* (ignorance), *tars* (fear), and *na'ra* (profit), that lure human beings towards *shirk*. Shari'ati took his audiences on a historical tour of the development and formation of religions, from the time of hunters and foragers to the beginning of complex societies. In all of these societies, he asserted that religion played a major role in shaping people's moral and ethical values and contrary to what some believe, people were deeply religious. Hence,

the task of the prophets sent by God was not to bring religion to an irreligious society but to replace one form of religion (*tawhid*) with another (*shirk*).⁴

a. *Qur'an and the Concept of tawhid*

It seems proper to analyze *tawhid* from the Qur'anic point of view before analyzing Shari'ati's perspective on this issue. The pivotal point for the whole doctrine and teaching of Islam revolves around *tawhid*. From this concept emanates the fundamental unity of the universe, of man, and of life. The aim of Islam is to establish a balance between the relationship of man to God and to the universe through beneficent adjustment. Islam insists on the Oneness of God and resolutely condemns any doctrine, ideas, or concepts that might associate God with any other thing or being as an equal or a partner.

Say: He is Allah, the One!
Allah, the eternally existent.
He does not beget nor was He begotten.
And there is none comparable to him.⁵

The primary object of most revelations is to accentuate the concept of *tawhid*: "your God is the One and only God," "Allah is the One and only God," "And set not any other god along with Allah," and "He sends down the angels with the Spirit of His command to whom He will of His bondsmen, saying; 'Warn man that there is no God but I, so take me alone for your protector.'" The concept of *tawhid* is further reinforced by more revelations, whether dealing with God's attributes, such as God is Ever-Hearing, All Knowing, All-Hearing, the Creator of all, the First Cause, the Maker, the Fashioner, the Gracious One, the Merciful One, the Mighty, the Wise, the Forgiver of sins, the Acceptor of repentance, the Stern in punishment, the Bountiful One, the Master of the Day of Judgment, or

emphasizing the impossibility and illogic of having a partner or son, except in the metaphorical sense in which all man are His children. "He has not taken to Himself any son nor is there any other god along with Him."⁶ To attribute any partner or equal to God would amount to a denial of *tawhid*, and doubting the essential and Divine nature of God, as well as opening the door for dominance of one partner over the other, which would result in chaos.

The aforementioned Qur'anic verses, along with numerous others, indicate that a plurality of gods would promote confusion among people. *Tawhid* and God's attributes, revealed to man at different stages, are for the purpose of guiding man toward fulfillment of life in all its dimensions.

b. Shari'ati's View of tawhid and shirk

In the view of Shari'ati, *tawhid* did not mean just believing in the oneness of God, to which he firmly gave credence, but it also meant examining it from a new perspective, a new world-view (*Jahan Bini*). From this standpoint, *tawhid* is the whole universe and ought to be regarded as a unity, not divided into this world and the hereafter, the natural and supernatural, substance and meaning, spirit and body. He furthermore asserted, that the whole existence should be viewed as a single form and a conscious organism that holds a will, intelligence, feeling and purpose.⁷ A human being is therefore a microcosm of this universe, but, not a perfect one. Hence, the relationship between God and human should be viewed from the perspective of being part of a hypostasis, of God, nature, and man. The origin of all is one and the same. From this standpoint, they all possess the same life, motion, direction, will, and spirit without being alien to one

another or opposing each other.⁸ In short, I believe what Shari'ati meant was, that God is the paramount and we are part of that totality, without Him we are vain and life is pointless. Therefore, *tawhid* gives independence, dignity, and power to human beings striving for perfection, as well as the ability to revolt against all powers that encompassed the elements of *shirk* which impelled followers away from the goal of perfection.

Shari'ati relied on Qur'anic examples to demonstrate his point of view. As will be discussed later, the story of the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden and subsequent events that led to the struggle between their children, Cain and Abel, were the beginning of an endless conflict between the elements of *shirk* and the aspects of perfection for the human being.⁹ As mentioned above, all the causes of societal ills, are the products of three major factors: *jahl* (ignorance), *tars* (fear), and *naf'a* (profit). These are the main components of *shirk* and the purpose of *tawhid* is to remove these elements from the life of man and societies.¹⁰

•Ignorance (Jahl)

Shari'ati's concept of *jahl* was not lack of knowledge in natural science, math, literature, law, technology, and other existing disciplines, but the lack of virtue. Highly educated individuals, Shari'ati claimed, were capable of utilizing their expertise in causing suffering to others. Slavery, political and economic oppression, and corruption and deceit are examples of how knowledge can be used for personal advantage in an unethical way. His concept of virtue was *hikmah*, also referred to as true knowledge of self-awareness. If we explore

Socrates' perception of wisdom, which directed human excellence, we see that when a human being recognized the difference between good and evil knowledge, he would gain possession of what is referred to as self-knowledge, which is awareness of what one needs, lacks, or must have in order to achieve moral perfection.¹¹ To Shari'ati, the purpose of *hikmah* was the ability to possess moral self-awareness and an enlightened conscience that would keep humans on the right path of *tawhid*.¹² Hence, it can be concluded that what he refers to as *jahl* is the lack of knowledge or ignorance in *hikmah*, not anything else.

Closer examination of several Qur'anic verses assisted Shari'ati in formulating what his concept of *hikmah* was. In the following verses, Islam emphasizes virtuous living, making proper use of one's faculties in multiplying the bounties provided by God, and proper regulation and adjustment of moral qualities, whether of mind or body, for just action.

O you messengers! Eat of the good things, and do right. Lo! I am aware of what you do.

Say: Who has forbidden the adornment of God which He has brought forth for His bondsmen, and the good things of His provision.¹³

These depend on guidance from their Lord. These are the successful ones.¹⁴

And do not approach the wealth of the orphan except with what is better until he reaches maturity. Give full measure and full weight, in justice. We ask not any soul beyond its scope. And if you give your word, do justice there to, even though it be against a kinsman, and fulfill the covenant of God.¹⁵

Shari'ati went on to explain that further Qur'anic verses revealed that when a person cultivates good morals, it represses a tendency toward bad morals. Alternatively, as the Qur'an puts it, every person is under a moral responsibility to protect and promote the well being of his own soul as well as that of others. In some cases, the Qur'an informs us that the natural instinct of revenge could even

be regulated if we place it under the control of reason and judgment. We might even be able to convert it into a moral quality.

If only there had been among the generations before you men possessing a remnant (of good sense) to warn (their people) against corruption on earth, as did a few of those whom We save from them!¹⁶

Lo! The riches and the progeny of those who disbelieve will not avail them against God, for such are against God, and such are rightful owners of the Fire.¹⁷

And whoever defends himself after he has suffered wrong...
And verily whoever is patient and forgives lo! that, verily, is (of) the permanent heart of things.¹⁸

Shari'ati also explained that there are numerous references to love in the Qur'an. If it is interpreted correctly, love can take on something of high moral quality. The strongest love is the love of God, which must come before everything else. Then, love of His messenger, parents, children, and others.¹⁹ It is by way of love that a man can subdue the urge for hatred and enmity, elements that could easily direct human beings toward *shirk*.

Let not the hatred of any people seduce you to deal unjustly. Deal justly; that is nearer to righteousness.²⁰

God loves those who are equitable.²¹

Shari'ati stated that Islam, in general, bestows great importance on achieving moral and spiritual excellence, however, we should remember that progress towards perfection is a lifetime quest for a true Muslim, so it must be consistent and uninterrupted. Perhaps, the best comfort for human beings is that we have been created with the intention of becoming a manifestation of divine attributes. Therefore, through hard work, the capability of accomplishing that goal is within the reach of every Muslim.

•Fear and Profit (*Tars and Nafs*)

Shari'ati believed that the origin of human fear and greed arose from death, poverty, weakness, and other economic or social deprivations. These two factors of fear and greed, in turn, are the cause of deterioration and corruption of an individual as well as of society. As a matter of fact, he regarded the two factors as one without making a distinction between them. He stated that not only would a corrupt person eventually ruin himself; he would automatically betray his people.²² Once again, Shari'ati took his readers through the historical process of the division of social order, whereby the political and economic hegemony of one person or country over another was the cause of human declivity within societies.²³ He furthermore stated that it is the fear of oppression, economic needs, or political necessity that forces a group of people to obey the elite class bent on exploiting their economic or political inferiority merely for the sake of personal gain and status.

Shari'ati viewed true Islam as the guide for diminishing the political and economic-based fear of oppression among the exploited. As will be discussed in a later chapter, Shari'ati claimed that the victory of Cain over Abel produced a new class of elite who managed to control the economic and political means of their society. The three main features of this elite class were: economic, political, and religious. These features corresponded to three main biblical/Qur'anic personalities of Pharaoh, who characterizes power, Aaron, who symbolizes wealth, and the clergy, who represent religion.²⁴ According to the Qur'an, parallel to these three features is *Naas* (people), "viceroy of God" and "His family" on earth. Shari'ati cited the following Qur'anic examples in justifying his claim that

the political, economic and religious authority lays in the hands of *Naas*, not the dominant few.²⁵

If you lend unto Allah a goodly loan....²⁶

Shari'ati stated that there is no need for any kind of "goodly loan" to God, since He is the creator of everything and everything belongs to Him. In the matter of social affairs, not religious, the word Allah could be interpreted as *Naas*. Thus, "goodly loan" is intended to *Naas*, not Allah.

Say: I seek refuge in the Lord of man,
The King of man,
The God of man.²⁷

According to Shari'ati, these three Qur'anic verses are a clear indication of God's authority over *Naas*. Hence, any kind of political, economic, or religious claim of leadership by the elite is invalid. Therefore, a society can function properly if people are part of its political and economic decision-making process. Politically, Shari'ati prescribed *shurá* (will be discussed later in further detail) as a political alternative. Economically, he illustrated that early Islam tried to eliminate economic-derived fear and greed by implementing the principle of *zakah* (almsgiving, poor tax or poor due). *Zakah* originally meant, "that which purifies" and "that which fosters or causes growth."²⁸ The exact amount of *zakah* averaged two and one-half percent of one's earnings and the proceeds were disbursed to relieve poverty and economic distress. He also believed that with the expansion of Islam, the principle of *zakah* lost its intent and was often used for political objectives, rather than decreasing economic disparity in the society.²⁹ Shari'ati was convinced that the revival of *zakah* would not clash with the capitalist-based economy of existing Islamic societies. He explained that not only did Islam not

reject capitalism, it also presented principles of dualism in profit and value and economy and morals. This dualism created equilibrium between the wealth in the society and brought an economic relief to common Muslims.³⁰ Shari'ati observed that economic uncertainty in present Muslim nations is induced by the non-Islamic elements of production, income, and ownership, causing Muslims to deviate from their financial responsibilities of assisting fellow Muslims.

Shari'ati and the Question of the True Islam

According to Shari'ati, Islamic civilization, which inherited the ancient ideas and knowledge of Afro-Eurasia, had a special place in history. The Iranians' history had been intertwined with Islam since the seventh century and had played an important role in shaping the intellectual aspects and historical events of Afro-Eurasian civilization. Living in a traditional society such as Iran, Shari'ati further concluded that Islam is its spirit and that one must first know its spirit in order to understand that society. He pointed out that Islam has regressed in many respects since its golden age, but eventually emerged from its conservative web and has been playing an active political role internationally in the twentieth century, particularly, since World War Two.³¹ Shari'ati advised his readers that to study and comprehend Islam, a distinction should be made between the Islam of the seventh century and the Islam of today, which is less authentic due to many unenlightened thoughts and conservative elements. Consequently, the focus of studying and analyzing Islam should be the early genuine Islam, not the present one.

In studying the authentic Islam, Shari'ati enumerated fourteen factors as the principal foundation of early Islam. Full analysis of all these factors would be an arduous task beyond the scope of this chapter. I will attempt to name and discuss those related to our discussion.

a. *The Establishment of the Direct Connection between God and Humans (Ejâd-e Râbete-ye Mostagheem Miân-e Khodâ va Ensân)*

Shari'ati related this factor exclusively to the emergence of the class system in human history. He believed that this contrast between the classes was initiated by the conflict between the sons of Adam, Cain and Abel, over their offerings to God, which culminated in Cain slaying his brother Abel out of jealousy. To Shari'ati, Abel represented the age of pastoralism in which some form of primitive socialism was the predominant form of economy, and Cain represented an agrarian-based economy that introduced individualism and the tools or capital monopoly of ownership.³² This incident triggered a permanent war between the followers of Cain, the killer, and Abel, the victim. In short, the age of common ownership of pastoralism was challenged by the age of agriculturists, the main characteristic of which was exclusive possession of the means of production by a few.³³

Out of this agrarian age, Shari'ati traced the historical development of classes. One of the early attributes of this age was the rise of the aristocratic class. In early Islam, aristocracy was associated mainly with genealogy and noble birth.³⁴ Whenever these social factors declined in the public's estimation, aristocracy lost its social credibility. Several examples of this kind of regression in Islamic history such as Ali and his descendants among the Shi'ites, the

Abbasid dynasty, the Fatimids, and others, show how legitimacy through genealogy was sought in order to challenge established governments.

Throughout history, the religious class as mediator between people and god/s, always played an important role in legitimizing the economic and political status of the aristocracy. In order to secure and maintain access to this tremendous amount of power, the clergy's self-interest called for safeguarding the status quo against any new innovation or idea that might have challenged clerical legitimacy. According to Shari'ati, innovation was the most vital of the elements needed for the survival of a progressive religion and was condemned by this class for fear of losing its economic and political hegemony. Hence, religion, which at one time was a revolutionary movement, eventually turned into a conservative and oppressive institution. Catholicism, prior to the Protestant Reformation in medieval Europe, and the emergence of the four schools of law in Islam (with the exception of Shi'ism where the doctrine of *ijtehad* was never abandoned) are two clear examples of such a process.³⁵

b. Universal Equality (*Barâbari-ye-Omomee*)

Shari'ati stated that Islam put the problem of equality on a scientific and philosophical foundation and regarded it as an indisputable natural principle, not determined by political, economic, or social factors. He claimed furthermore that the final goal was to move from material equality to the level of spiritual brotherhood. In doing so, he analyzed some Qur'anic verses that dealt with philosophy on man's creation, the relationships between spouses, and religious freedom, in order to present Islam's true intention of producing a world in which a

real universal equality could be achieved.³⁶ Concerning the philosophy of creation, Shari'ati produced several pertinent examples from the Qur'an that relate to this discussion. The leading example is none other than the first revelation received by the Prophet on mount Hira;

Read: In the name of thy Lord who creates.
Created man from a clot.³⁷

The second example is the story of Adam and Eve as the parents of all human beings, even though different races eventually emerged.

O man, be careful of your duty to your Lord Who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from them twain has spread abroad a multitude of men and women."³⁸

Through these and other examples, Shari'ati initiated the basis for his argument by indicating that we all have come from the same parents. Consequently, there can be no superiority of one race or person over another. As the Qur'an states, "Man is one community."³⁹ On the matter of the relationship between spouses, Shari'ati discussed numerous references in the Qur'an about this issue. The following Qur'anic verses were used by Shari'ati to illustrate his viewpoint on the relationship between spouses.

It is made lawful for you to go unto your wives on the night of the fast. They are raiment for you and ye are raiment for them.⁴⁰

Here, raiment should not be interpreted as a piece of clothing but as an integral part of a person that will cover and protect the other. Hence, the relationship of the spouses should be as close to one another as one's clothes are to oneself. Also:

Your women are a tilth for you, so go to your tilth as you will, and send (good deeds) before your spouse, and fear God, that you will (one day) meet Him.⁴¹

Shari'ati asserted once again, that we ought to go beyond the verse's superficial interpretation and concentrate on the ecology of the Arabian Peninsula. To produce and cultivate fertile land sufficient water was required. Since water was a rare and precious commodity in Arabia, it would seem that the Qur'an taught that women are the most valuable component of a sedentary society, like Mecca and Medina. Obviously, there are more references in the Qur'an about status and rights of women, but their explication, here would depart from our main purpose. On the issue of equal rights, economic equality, and political freedom, Shari'ati gave several examples from the caliphates of Abu Bakr and Ali. He concluded that the most important aspect of universal equality was freedom of religion. In doing so he began with an exclamation by the Prophet to his companions: "Why are you imposing religion on the people? It must be granted by God." Also the prophet Muhammad ordered one of his commanders, "Do not harm the Jewish inhabitants of Yemen."⁴² By referring to the following Qur'anic verses, Shari'ati stated that Islam was the first monotheistic religion that judged and treated the followers of the true religions equally, setting a precedent for tolerance that was not perceived in other existing monotheistic religions of the time.

There is no compulsion in religion. The right direction is henceforth distinct from error. And he who rejects false deities and believes in Allah has grasped a firm handhold which will never break.⁴³

Lo! Those who believe (in that which is revealed unto thee Muhammad), and those who are Jews, and Christians, and Sabaeans and whoever believe in Allah and the Last Day and do right will surely have the rewards with their Lord, and there shall no fear come upon them neither shall they grieve..⁴⁴

And argue not with the People of the Scripture.⁴⁵

Call unto the way of thy Lord with the wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way.⁴⁶

And bear with patience what they utter, and part from them with a fair leave-taking.⁴⁷

Unto each nation have We given sacred rites which they are to perform.⁴⁸

c. *Mutual Consultation in Government (Shurâ Dar Hokoumat)*

To Shari'ati, *shurâ* constituted an essential basis of a representative Islamic regime where people were participants in the process of governmental decision-making. His view on this issue was derived primarily from two major sources, the Qur'anic verses and the Hadith of the Prophet.

"Consult in different affairs" or "And those who answer the call of their Lord and establish worship, and whose affairs are a matter of counsel."⁴⁹

He believed that the maintenance of solidarity in the Islamic community was an objective of the Prophet necessary to ensure political stability among Medinese Muslims. Besides the aforementioned references to *shurâ* in the Qur'an, there are also ample illustrations that can easily be deduced from different Hadith. For example, in the battle of the Muteh, all three commanders appointed by the Prophet were killed, so people elected a new commander on their own and the Prophet did not object to this election.⁵⁰ Although the Prophet enjoyed a special status among his people (followers), he still permitted them to vote and express their opinions. He valued the vote of the majority in social affairs because he realized a healthy society is one in which people are allowed to express their views, even if those elected were not credible individuals. On another occasion, at the battle of Badr, the Prophet moved the camp to another location on the advice of one of his soldiers. The decision to fight against the

enemy was put to a vote and they embarked on war with the consensus of the majority.⁵¹

The aforementioned and other references of *shurâ*, indicate that the Prophet tried to form a progressive society in which each person had an independent vote and the ability to influence political distinctions. Within this type of society everyone has a say, regardless of his influence, wealth, or tribal affiliation. Because Ali was constrained by the obligation of *shurâ*, he could not object to the election of Abu Bakr, Umar, and Uthman to succeed the Prophet as caliphs. With this in mind (a progressive political atmosphere), Shari'ati chose *shurâ* as an essential element and factor in realizing and establishing an authentic Islamic government.

d. *People's Happiness and Adversity are the Cause of their Acts and Inherent Quality not the Cause of Intercessions and Affinities (Sa'âdat va Shaqâvat-e Afrâd Ma'loul-e A'mâl va Safât-e Zâtî ânân Ast, na Ma'loul-e Shafa'at-hâ va Qrâbat-hâ)*

The idea of predestination, allowing one to neglect one's responsibility due to the belief that one's destiny has already been determined by God regardless of what action one might take, is a very prevalent concept in Islam. Shari'ati rejected the rigid notion of predestination and argued that each person was responsible for his own actions in this world. In order to provide evidence for his point of view on this issue, Shari'ati referred to Qur'anic verses that illustrated the validity of his interpretation.

Every soul is a pledge for its own deeds.⁵²

And who so does good an atom's weight of good will see it then,
And who so does ill an atom's weight of evil will see it then.⁵³

Lo! Allah does not wrong humankind in anything, but humans wrong themselves.⁵⁴

Then will it be said unto those who dealt unjustly: Taste the torment of eternity. Are you requited for anything other than what you used to earn?⁵⁵

Say: Have you considered what provision Allah has sent down for you, how you have made of it what is lawful and unlawful?⁵⁶

Even in the Biblical story of Noah, with all the sacrifices that he made in order to obey God's command, there is clear evidence that God judges according to the deeds of a person, not one's affiliation to the messenger of God.

And Noah cried unto his Lord and said; My Lord! Lo! My son is of my household! Surely your promise is the Truth and you are the most Just of Judges.

He Said; O Noah! Lo! He is not of your household; Lo! He is of evil conduct, so do not ask of Me that whereof you have no knowledge.⁵⁷

Also, on several occasions, prophet Muhammad advised his daughter "Do good deeds, as I can not do anything for you before God"⁵⁸ Shari'ati believed that true belief superseded the blood association of family and that "family" became a family of faith rather than ancestry. Hence, believing directly in predestination, without being responsible for one's actions, would definitely promote the idea of carelessness and finally, perhaps, even chaos in society.

e. *Intellect and Knowledge (A'ql va Ilm)*

As mentioned above, the first revelation to prophet Muhammad deals with "read" and also with the "pen", two important elements of intellect and learning.⁵⁹ Shari'ati stated that the first task of God, like an educator, was to teach man knowledge of the creation and what he does not know.

By the pen and that which they write (therewith)⁶⁰

And if all the trees in the earth were pens, and the sea, with seven more seas to help it, (were ink), the words of God could not be exhausted. Lo! God is mighty, Wise.⁶¹

These verses are a clear affirmation of the vast knowledge that exists in the world and the concept to seek it through the pen. The pen is highly regarded, indicating that God is giving direction to a society by teaching, that learning is not only valued but is the key to spiritual prosperity. Thus, Shari'ati believed that intellect and knowledge should not be confined to religious science and jurisprudence, as most religious scholars have been treating them throughout history, in order to have a total monopoly over the faith and souls of people. A prime example can be derived from the Muslim clergy before and after the Islamic golden age. By interpreting the meaning of "read" and "pen" as merely knowledge that pertains to religion, it would further restrain the intellectual ability of individuals to inquire into a logical reinterpretation of the Qur'an. In short, Shari'ati concluded that the Islamic scholars took away the true concept of intellect as God had granted it to the Muslims.⁶²

He also argued that within the framework of the Qur'an, the pursuit of knowledge is unconditional; otherwise, the Prophet would not have advised his followers to "seek knowledge even if it is in China" or Ali would not have attested that "whoever teaches me a word would make me his slave."⁶³ All in all, if knowledge were restricted to religion, as religious scholars believed, then there would be no need to "seek it in China." God would elucidate knowledge through the revelations to the Prophet. Consequently, Shari'ati believed that a progressive society, through unrestricted knowledge, was the one that God and the Prophet might have envisioned.

f. Compatibility Between Religion and Civilization (Sâzesh Miân-e Dîn va Tamaddon)

Shari'ati was trying to bring accord between religion and the temporal world. In doing so, he argued that almost all religions explained the existence of the universe and humankind. They all involved rich moral and ethical teaching and they also viewed materialistic elements as the source of corruption in this world. Some eventually made this their priority and reacted negatively to preoccupation with the accumulation of materialistic goods. Therefore, offering spiritual salvation to their followers in this and the next world justifies this negativism. Thus, Christianity was a direct response to the Roman Empire, noted for immorality and corruption.⁶⁴ In Islam, asceticism could also be regarded as a reaction to the villainous dynasties of the Umayyad and Abbasids.

In early Islam, however, according to Shari'ati, regarding materialistic elements of the world negatively not only was absent, but financial prosperity complemented spiritual prosperity, as if the two elements were working together to produce a perfect human. The following Qur'anic examples, cited by Shari'ati, give a good indication of this aim:

"This world is a field for the afterlife."

"Do not forget your share of this world, do good deeds as God was kind to you."

"O God! Be good to us in this life and afterlife."⁶⁵

Thus, we can easily conclude that spiritual and material prosperity are the constant request of a Muslim. Shari'ati believed that while other religions' goal was a moral and spiritual perfection of humanity without materialistic reward, true Islam saw the gradual perfection of a human being through absolute financial and spiritual responsibility for others in order to better the society. Ignoring this responsibility would be detrimental to the society as a whole.

Whoever spends a day without any concern about the well-being of other Muslims is not a Muslim.⁶⁵

He furthermore indicated that this surely confirmed the view that the materialistic elements of a civilization should be used for the benefit of all, not be confined to the hands of a few, because limiting access to the material sources of wealth would clearly produce unjust economic disparities among members of the same society.

g. *Humans Possess an Unchangeable Tradition (Ensân Dârâ-ye Sunnati Ast Ta'qir Nâpazir)*

Shari'ati used the term *sunnah* with a new perspective, one very different from its customary meaning of "tradition." *Sunnah* was not just the customs of a group of a people or society, but the scientific laws inherent within one's physiology and spirit, as well as in the society. He furthermore inferred that Islam instructed man (both body and soul), society, and history to have unchangeable and precise laws. These laws could not be altered by an historical occurrence, the determination of heroes, or even the will of God.⁶⁷ He also mentioned that a society was similar to a living being, with a birth, infancy, maturity, and death. Therefore, no one could totally destroy a society. There might be a temporary set back, but elements within a society would give rise to a new generation that would continue the human legacy. Thus, the task of a Muslim is to identify these laws in order to better himself and his society.

The first step toward understanding what *sunnah* is would be to analyze the meaning of *Naas* (people/man) in Islam. According to Shari'ati, *Naas* had a more profound meaning than "people." As the Qur'an indicates, humans are the "viceroy" of God and "His family" on earth. Perhaps this is why God refers to

Ka'ba not only as the house of God, but also as the house of *Naas*. In doing so, God is sharing His house with the members of His family, who could easily comprise all of man including societies other than the Islamic.⁶⁸ As long as *Naas* is aware of the laws of *sunnah* the individual can mold them for his benefit and the benefit of the community. However, it is the *sunnah* that would dictate and alter the direction of historical and social events. Shari'ati asserted that the Qur'an clearly demonstrated that the will of God was not the major factor determining the historical events that occurred in a society because God has decreed laws and humans free-will, as primary agents of change.

Lo! God Changeth not the condition of a people until they change what is in their hearts.⁶⁹

Those are a people who have passed away. Theirs is what they earned, and yours is what you earn, and you will not be asked of what they used to do.⁷⁰

Hence, it is the *Naas* who have ability to dominate the laws of *sunnah* in order to alter the civilization of human societies, not God or the actions of other people. In short as Shari'ati indicated, "*sunnah* is both the struggle for existence and the engine for the perfection of human society."⁷¹

h. Other relevant factors

Since a full analysis of each element would be beyond the scope of this analysis, the related elements will be discussed only briefly.

•To Inform Humans about the Secrets and the Order of Nature (Tavajjoh Dâdan-e Ensân be Nezâm-e Tabi'at va Asrâr-e ân)

Shari'ati's main focus here was to show how Islam, in general, dealt with details, the obvious, real things, i.e., God's vows to earth, plants, camels, olives, stars, sun, pen, and etc., as means to group the entirety. In doing so, Shari'ati

asserted that Islam encouraged followers to observe and analyze the details until they arrived at historic truth.⁷² The following Qur'anic verses agree with Shari'ati's view:

Travel about in the land and see the nature of the consequences for those who did deny (the messengers).

Have they not traveled in the land and seen the nature of the consequences for those who were before them?

Say travel in the land, and see the nature of the consequence for those who were before you.⁷³

These Qur'anic verses encourage man to observe and use intellect to arrive at truth. Furthermore, we could interpret the verses to mean that material reality is something to gain knowledge from, not to ignore.

•Acknowledging Instinct and Human Desires (E'trâf be Ghrâyez va Havas'ha-ye Ensâni)

Under the control of the clerics, the popular belief was that proper Muslims should be dissuaded from human desires, ornamental or otherwise. However, Shari'ati believed that this was not necessarily the case. He cited additional Qur'anic verses to verify his point:

O Children of Adam! Look to your adornment at every place of worship, and eat and drink, but do not be prodigal. Lo! He does not love the prodigals.

Say: Who has forbidden the adornment of God which He has brought forth for His bondsmen, and the good things of His provision.⁷⁴

He asserted that these and other Qur'anic verses clearly implied that God created everything on this earth to serve and assist man. However, moderation was the key to a balanced world and greed was the element of destruction. Like any other religion, piety was an important aspect of Islam but does not forbid the Muslim from enjoying the gifts of God.

•Acknowledging the Rights of Other Religions and Nations (E'traf be Hoqq-e Melal va Madhâheb-e Bigâneh)

Shari'ati demonstrated how tolerant Islam was toward other religions, particularly the People of the Book:

God does not forbid you to show kindness to those who warred against you on account of religion and drove you out from your homes, or to deal justly with them. Lo! God loves the just dealers.

God forbids you only from making friends [and relying on] those who warred against you on account of religion and have driven you out from your homes or and helped to drive you out, because such are wrong doers.⁷⁵

From the above verses, Shari'ati deduced that Islam encouraged kindness and tolerance to the followers of the other faiths as long as they do not wage war against you. In fact, the history of Islamic civilization proves that religious minorities were treated fairly, were exempt from arbitrary persecution, and even enjoyed social status, in contrast to other existing civilizations of the time. This, too, is contrary to the popular belief that Islam is inherently a violent religion and regards others as infidels.

•Acknowledging the Principle of Evolution (E'traf be Nâmoos-e Takâmol)

Shari'ati did not investigate the process of human evolution from Australopithecus, Homo habilis, Homo erectus, Homo sapien, and finally to Homo sapiens sapiens (modern man). Rather, since the perspective of the creation of man in the Qur'an is similar to the Old Testament and the Bible, Shari'ati viewed the principle of evolution in man from the aspects of the intellect awareness, rather than physical development. He believed that through gradual, intellectual evolution, human would shed the clay-like nature (*ensân-e khaki*) and eventually reach the level of a true spiritual human (*ensân-e rouhi*) and, finally, attain a god-

like nature (*ensan-e khodâ'i*).⁷⁶ Three forces that contributed to this principle of evolution: awareness (*agâhi*) and determination (*erâdeh*), freedom and choice (*azâdi va ikhtiâr*), and the ability to create (*afarinandegi*). By doing so, man becomes a god-like human and will accept the ultimate responsibility of God on earth as a trustee to oversee and guide the nature and process of human evolution.⁷⁷

•Religion is to Benefit the Human Being not to Conquer and Minimize Him (Din Barâ-ye Masle'hat-e Ensân Ast na Taskhir va Ezlâl-e Ou)

According to Shari'ati, the references that revealed the nature of true Islam were *tariqah* and *shari'ah*, meaning the path or road leading to water, the very source of life. Unfortunately, for some people who do not have a clear aim in life, the path becomes the ultimate goal. For others with a precise objective in mind, however, the path becomes the device that will lead him to the ultimate goal, namely, to be an ideal human. This might be why the essence of true Islam was lost when Muslims began concentrating upon the customary aspects of religion as means to promote the good and oppose evil, rather than pursuing Islam as a device directing them toward the perfection of humanity.⁷⁸ Shari'ati cited the following Qur'anic verses to support his view on the ordinary aspects of Islam.

Lo! Worship preserves from lewdness and iniquity, but verily remembrance of God is more important.⁷⁹

God would not place a burden on you, except to purify you and perfect His grace upon you, so that you might give thanks.⁸⁰

It is not righteousness that you turn your face to the East or the West, but righteous is he who believes in God and the Last Day, and the angels and Scripture, and the prophets; and gives his wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk, and to orphans and the needy, and the wayfarer, and to those who ask, and set slaves free; and observes proper worship and pays the poor-due; and keep their treaty when they make one; and are patient in tribulation and adversity in time of stress. Such are the sincere ones. Such are the God-fearing.⁸¹

Count ye the slaking of a pilgrim's thirst and tendance of the Inviolable Place of Worship as (equal to the worth of him) who believes in God and the Last Day, and strives in the way of God? They are not equal in the sight of God. God guides not wrongdoing folk.⁸²

He explained that all these Qur'anic verses suggested that as a practicing Muslim, one ought to follow the obligations of Islam. It is sincerity in practice that pleases God and guides a Muslim toward understanding the true humanitarian nature of Islam. Shari'ati intended to convey to his reader that religion should be used to better the welfare of humanity, not dominate it, and it should also be used to perfect both the individual person and all humankind.

•Freedom of Discussion and Expression (*Azâdi-ye Bahs va Ebrâz-e Nazar*)

Shari'ati initiated a discussion on intellectual and political freedom by criticizing Europe of the Middle Ages, which was dominated by the Church and its superstitious views of the universe. Nature and man were understood through interpretation of the existing body of knowledge at the time. He judged the Islamic Middle Period (1000-1500) and onward with the same level of criticism. Shari'ati contended that after Mu'tazilites' rationalism and free will failed and as Islamic orthodoxy gained momentum, the gate of *ijtihad* (independent judgment) was forever closed. From that point on, the possibility of *Bid'ah* (innovation) would be tolerated, with the exception of Shi'ism, which continued the practice of *ijtihad* under the guidance of a *Mujtahid* (one who practices *ijtihad*). In his *Islâm-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. 2, Shari'ati regarded *ijtihad* not only as a device for the deliberation of legal questions by religious scholars, but also an important element in Islam that could easily assist a permanent mental revolution in a

society. He stated furthermore that *ijtihad* should not be confined to the affairs of jurisprudence alone. It could also be utilized by an individual in his society, to exercise independent opinion, beliefs, and political ideas. He should not imitate others, but rather, use reason to reach the final decision. Hence, Shari'ati believed that *ijtihad* is a permanent mental revolution in an Islam that could be the basis of an ideology.⁸³

Shari'ati tried to rescue Islam from its traditional clergy-dominated web and steer it into a progressive, interpretive Islam. This had more appeal to the young and educated, who had a desire to understand an Islam that met their needs. Shari'ati viewed authentic Islam as an ideology that could be the foundation of a progressive society where each individual was responsible for its betterment and perfection. He sought an ideal society that was modern but comparable to the society created by the Prophet in the city of Medina.

Chapter Four

World-View (Jahân-Bini) as the Foundation of an Islamic Ideology

Ideology has numerous meanings conveyed in terms such as beliefs, dogma, doctrines, opinions and convictions. I believe that Greek philosophers, particularly Plato, were the first to formulate systematic studies about ideas and ideology. The term "idea" is derived from the Greek verb "idein", meaning to "see" or that of something "seen"¹ It seems that it was originally meant to denote the outward form or shape, as well as the inner structure or nature of things.² Interestingly enough, the term "eidos" (form), as used by Plato and others, could easily have been interchangeable with the verb "idein," meaning "idea."³ Therefore, the term "idea" did not denote a concept or notion produced by the mind alone, but also meant something outside the mind or in the real world.

Shari'ati's definition of ideology outside its existing conventional meaning was that of human self-awareness, beyond the political, social, technical, artistic, and philosophical consciousness. He stated that a person might possess any of the aforementioned consciousness but still may lack any notion of what human self-awareness is.⁴ Shari'ati equated this self-awareness to the Sanskrit word Veda, meaning knowledge; a special knowledge of "seeing" or having "vision," and the Arabic word of *hikmah* which affirmed somewhat the same meaning as Veda. He also asserted that the analytical view of *hikmah* is in so many ways, closer to Socrates' Sophia, which consisted of comprehending and discovering

the truth of the universe, life and man.⁵ Nonetheless, his concept of *hikmah* was primarily derived from the Qur'an and had the meaning of light:

"Whereby God guideth him who seeketh His good pleasure unto paths of peace. He bringeth them out of darkness unto light by His decree, and guideth them unto a straight path".⁶

He also cited other Qur'anic verses to elucidate the importance of light as the ultimate truth or perhaps, awareness:

"God is the friend of those who believe. He bringeth them out of darkness into light. As for those who disbelieve, their friends are transgressors, who bring them out of light into every kind of darkness."⁷

Shari'ati argued that the Qur'an clearly indicated that all knowledge is derived from God, with human beings retaining as much of it as they are able. Hence, true believers ought to find the right path, leading them towards that "light."

Shari'ati believed that it was the Qur'anic *hikmah* that all faithful longed for. Since *hikmah* was misinterpreted as meaning general knowledge, influenced by Greek philosophy during the Islamic age of intellectual fluorescence, its true essence and meaning was lost from that time on. He also advised his audiences and readers that the most important part of ideology was its foundation. With a firm foundation, all subsequent components could be added. One should first seek and comprehend the path to self-awareness. Upon its acquisition, a person would then be able to play a useful role as an enlightened individual in the society.⁸ Hence, Shari'ati concluded that the foundation of Islamic ideology is how people perceive the existing world and society they live in. He referred to this perception as *jahân-bini* (world-view).

World-View (Jahân-Bini)

Shari'ati suggested that *jahân-bini* should be viewed from its philosophical, sociological, and anthropological contents in order to understand the existing world, rather than from a one-dimensional aspect of how the world appears to us. Humans never observe the world through geography alone. Several materialistic and spiritual factors may determine the outcome of a person's world-view. Since our main concern, however, is to deal with Shari'ati's authentic Islam and *jahân-bini* as its foundation, we shall limit ourselves to his view alone.

Shari'ati believed that *jahân-bini* as the foundation for Islamic ideology had three components: *ensân* (ideal human), *târikh* (history), and *jâme'a* (society). He also explained that *ensân* was the total truth, *târikh* were the events and trends that occurred in a various movement of time, and finally, *jâme'a* was the representation of what mankind produced in a specific period of time.⁹ Hence, based upon these components, the foundation of an ideology would be solidified and the ultimate goal of an ideal society would be laid.

a. Ideal Human (Ensân)

In order to understand what Shari'ati was indicating by promoting *ensân* as the cornerstone of his *jahân-bini*, he explored the philosophy of creation in Islam. According to Islamic belief, the universe was created and did not just happen. The purpose of its creation and the laws that govern it, under the

direction of God, were to assist man in the use of His bounties.¹⁰ Indeed the creation of man passed through many stages, originating from water and clay, eventually formed from sperm and ultimately bequeathed with sense and understanding.

Who made all things good which He created, and He began the creation of man from clay; Then He made his seed from a draught of despised fluid; Then He fashioned him and breathed into him of His spirit; and appointed for you hearing and sight and hearts. Small thanks give ye!¹¹

Shari'ati also explained that the Qur'an emphasized the unity of mankind by declaring that man had been created of one kind. The words used for man are *bashar* and *ensân*. It is very difficult to denote exact English meanings for *bashar* and *ensân*, but in an attempt to prevent any confusion and at the same time clearly indicate Shari'ati's meaning on this topic, I will use "man" as the meaning of *bashar* and "ideal human" as the meaning for *ensân*. Shari'ati distinguished between the two by emphasizing that *bashar* or man, pertained to someone who had committed terrible atrocities, been selfish, greedy, deceitful or vengeful and uncommitted to serving others.¹² He further explained that *ensân* or ideal human was removed from the conventional meaning of man and was a person who strived to achieve a higher spiritual status of humanity, in actuality, a way to deviate from just *bashar* into an ideal human.¹³ It was within this perspective that God referred to *ensân* as His vicegerent on earth, the one that possessed God's attributes, a blessing from which even angels were deprived. If we were created in God's image, surely God's intention was a perfect ideal human not just a biological man with inclinations towards all kinds of amoral and atrocious deeds.

Shari'ati also gave a new interpretation to this Qur'anic verse; "...unto Him we are returning".¹⁴ Here he differs with the Sufis' (Islamic Mystics) belief that an *ensân* will 'return' to God.¹⁵ To Shari'ati, God was not in a permanent place, therefore, when an *ensân* departed to Him he became 'one' with Him. God is infinite, eternal, and absolute. Hence, an *ensân's* departure or journey toward God is the process of eternal perfection, leading the ideal human to an infinite God, the ultimate goal.¹⁶ Shari'ati prescribed to his audiences and the readers that the goal of an *ensân* ought to be that of becoming one with God, thus acquiring the completion of human evolution.

Characteristics of an Ideal Human (Ensân)

Shari'ati enumerated three major characteristics for becoming an *ensân*: *khod-agâ* (Self-awareness), *enteKhâb konandeh* (being able to choose), and *afarinandeh* (to create).¹⁷

Shari'ati asserted that among all the creatures of God, man is the only one who holds the ability to think and eventually be aware of his existence and the world around him. However, there are several factors and elements of doubt, feeling, and rebellion that lead to self-awareness. Furthermore, he maintained that it is 'doubt' that forces an individual to seek and analyze everything, from his existence to the existence of the universe. One cannot determine his existence without "sensing" himself, and finally, one ought to rebel towards mediocrity of his existence in the achievement of the ultimate goal of becoming an ideal human.¹⁸

Shari'ati believed that "to rebel" was the sublime quality that was a characteristic of humans alone. In order to clarify this view he once again relied on the Qur'an to illustrate his point. He believed that "the fall" of Adam from *jennat* (paradise) was an intentional act of rebellion not one of deceit by the *ibis* (devil). It was a revolt against the wishes of God and a step closer towards perfection. As long as Adam was in paradise, Shari'ati asserted that he had the status of an angel whose purpose was to consume what was provided for him. Hence, paradise was a pseudo-paradise, not an infinite place. Adam realized that it was ultimately the ideal human that would return to become one with God. Therefore, at this point, Adam was closer to being a *bashar* than an *ensân*.¹⁹

Shari'ati stated that this act of "falling," was the beginning of Adam choosing his destiny, rather than being controlled by the forces of nature. This "fall" also gave Adam a new identity and a new beginning in order to discover his surroundings and understand the purpose of his existence. This is what Shari'ati suggested to be the genesis of self-awareness for Adam. Surely, the act of redeeming himself by way of praying and submission was Adam's choice, not an act of imposition. In short, Shari'ati described what qualified self-awareness for man is "quality and nature of his perception, the nature of the structure of the universe, and the quality and the nature of his relationship with the universe."²⁰

Shari'ati argued that although in this Qur'anic verse, Adam said "Our Lord! We have wronged ourselves. If Thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, surely we are of the lost!"²¹ It appears that Adam's act was a regretful one and, perhaps at best, an accident not a revolt. On the other hand, Shari'ati

inferred that in an attempt to help man have a sense of self-awareness in life, God bequeathed upon him the appropriate faculties to accompany his pursuit.

"Surely We created him in the best of molds."²²

Shari'ati asserted that it was Adam's request for God to lead, not hinder him in his pursuit of self-reliance.

In addition to man's innate capacities, best implemented for the purposeful achievement of life, God made it possible for man to dominate over the forces of nature. In the sense that laws govern all of nature, these laws are obtainable and man ought to seek and learn them in order to increase his mastery over the forces of nature, and at the same time, extract greater munificence from them.

Shari'ati also stated that there are ample Qur'anic examples in which God acknowledges the rebellious nature of man, a precedent set by Adam, and an indication that man desires to attain self-awareness in life despite his rebellious nature; "man will return to Him."

"Teacheth man that which he knew not."

"Nay, but verily man is rebellious."

"That he thinketh himself independent!"

"Lo! Onto thy Lord is the return."²³

On the issue of *entekhâb konandeh* (being able to choose), Shari'ati believed that what separated man from the rest of God's creatures was his ability to think and choose. While the rest of living beings have been dominated by natural instinct, man relies on his ability to think, thus being able to control and benefit from the forces of nature.²⁴ He also stated that the world is based upon *ellat va ma'loul* (cause and effect) and that every event occurs because

some other event has already taken place. Therefore, in a world of cause and effect it is only man that has the ability to prevent or control events by placing himself in the role of *ellat* (cause.) Of all the analogies that Shari'ati made, the example of hunger seems the most appropriate to express Shari'ati's point. In a living being, hunger is caused by a series of chemical, physical, biological and psychological actions and reactions. While animals do not have much control over this natural force man can easily use his intellect to control his hunger for religious, political or physical reasons. It is his determination and will that prevents him from being dominated or controlled by hunger.²⁵

Shari'ati also believed that if the ability of choice, will and determination diminished in man, the chance of elevating himself to the status of *ensân* (ideal human) would decrease as well. This transformation from *bashar* (man) to *ensân* is totally based upon man's ability to be responsible for his actions and to make the right choice, rather than letting forces of nature, or historical and economic factors determine his destiny. As Shari'ati pointed out, these factors naturally have a role in the outcome of one's future and his society. However, man possesses the ability to alter, control, or correct these forces in order to improve his status as a responsible individual with the ultimate goal of becoming an *ensân*.²⁶

On the subject of *afarinandeh* (to create), Shari'ati asserted that man was constantly in a stage of mental evolution and was the only being who had the ability to utilize his environment to create things not provided for him in their complete form. To some extent, he agreed with the notion of some scholars that

the creative aspect of man was caused by need and necessity, which throughout his evolution forced him to make tools and other devices in order to survive and advance in a very harsh environment.²⁷ However, if we take the factor of need as the prime cause of man's innovative ability, then we should pose the question of how man has gone beyond his natural instinct of materialistic necessity and has become the creator of ideals that fulfill his intellectual exigency. This ought to be viewed as an historical accident and nothing more. It is in this regard that Shari'ati associated physical need as a primary characteristic of early man rather than an ideal human. Here Shari'ati relied on the German philosopher, Martin Heidegger's (1889-1976) ideas, referring to the intellectual ability of man as being the product of his environment and society, and finally, becoming the creator of his society and his history.²⁸

Shari'ati stated that man's creative potential passed through two distinctive stages. First, he was able to create things that the environment does not provide for him. Secondly, he showed his artistic ingenuity by re-creating things, making them to his liking, not the way they were presented by nature. Perhaps, man saw a deficiency in nature and felt that he must remedy things to satisfy his idealistic needs.²⁹

Shari'ati elucidated that without comprehending the nature of *ensân* it would be futile to discuss art, religion, society, civilization and ideology. Some scholars have described man as a rational being, ideal being and a host of other definitions, however, none have clarified that a rational being is following a long and continuous mental and spiritual evolutionary process, with his goal of

becoming an *ensân*.³⁰ Shari'ati asserted that an *ensân* is a being that has the ability to possess and utilize the three divine characteristics of *khod-agâ* (self-awareness), *entekhab konandeh* (being able to choose) and *afarinandeh* (to create) in order to complete his spiritual evolution and become a true vicegerent of God on earth, knowing that in the afterlife 'he will return to Him and become one.'³¹

Shari'ati identified four major *jabr* (constraints) that would prevent a *bashar* from completing the evolutionary process of becoming an *ensân*. These *jabr* were different types of ideologies, i.e., Naturalism, Materialism and Historicism, all formed during the course of modern time, to allow societies to become enhanced and formidable. However, they each overlooked man, did not give him proportionate attention and rejected him as a fully self-aware being.³²

Naturalism emphasized that everything existing, was natural and a part of nature. Man was subject to lawful and natural processes and intelligence emerged from the active life of organisms within nature. Furthermore, nature was a determined system and man as part of that nature, was resolute.³³ In the case of Materialism, the main focal point was that all events, acts, and state of affairs were inferior to material subjects and their interrelationships. Hence, man's physical and personal desires, as well as his existence, were based upon matter.³⁴ Leopold Von Ranke, often regarded as the founder of Historicism, envisioned history as a rigorous science that should be understood in developmental terms and supplies the key to understanding all things human. At the same time, however, every epoch and every culture is viewed as unique.

This notion eventually solidified the idea that man was the product of historical events and trends.³⁵

Shari'ati considered all the aforementioned ideologies' as showing how nature, matter and historical events shaped man and his society. In that regard, man was being sacrificed for the sake of totality (society). Shari'ati claimed that he never rejected any of these ideologies and concurred with them to some extent; however, his main objective in discussing them was to show that man, in his evolutionary process of becoming an ideal human, should free himself from these constraints. He is able to utilize technology for undermining and controlling natural circumstances, analyzing and comprehending historical events and trends in order to play a major role in his evolutionary course of completion.³⁶ Man, for his benefit, could mold ideologies, however, Shari'ati pointed out that there is another laborious constraint; "prison of self." Without mastery over this one constraint, the rest of his evolutionary course would be pointless. Prison of self is more difficult to attain, hence, it is not like other prisons where man is aware of their existence and can use accumulated knowledge to deal with them. It is "love," but not the spiritual love, in which one must sacrifice his interests for the sake of others. It is a "love" where an individual annihilates himself to save other beings. In short, it is the love of humanity, though often misguided, that disrupts man from attaining his goal. The only path that enables man to break out of this prison is that of discovering his true religion.³⁷

b. History (Tārīkh)

The study of history usually involves continuous argument about the historical experience, nature and pattern of communities within which humans live and work. Patterns and trends present the changes that a society might go through in order to shape and mold its future. Historical patterns and trends may be involved in the development of human communities, but generally, the history of each community or society depends upon the variables that exist within the boundaries of their societies. It is in this regard that Shari'ati's definition of history, the events and trends that occurred in a various movement of time, does not vary from the conventional denotation. However, his view of history differs radically from others. He believed that in order to understand the philosophy of history in Islam, one should comprehend that history is the outcome of natural and transitional activities in time. Shari'ati posed the question; if history is the cause of man's natural and transitional activities then what is the instigator of all these historical changes?³⁸ Shari'ati relied heavily on Toynbee's perception of history, which claimed that the two factors of internal and external intrusions were the major instigators of change in a society.³⁹ Toynbee, nonetheless, argued that race, environment, and diffusion of ideas, culture, and goods, along with other intrusions, are factors that determine changes in a society.⁴⁰ These views differ sharply from the religious perception that divine intervention is always the cause of historical change.

Shari'ati adhered to Toynbee's intrusion concept of historical change to illustrate that, prosperous societies and civilizations that controlled their

environment eventually produced economic and political stability, assisting their genesis and supplying them with the necessities for historical developments.

The prime examples given by Toynbee are the Egyptian, Mesopotamian, Greek and Roman civilizations. He indicated that when a civilization has broken down for various internal reasons, and is no longer in a state of economic and political growth, it would be vulnerable to external intrusion, giving rise to its fall.⁴¹

Shari'ati built upon this concept by indicating that the historical cycle would revitalize with the arrival of intruders and would continue its development until the end of its lifespan.⁴²

On this issue, Shari'ati applied the historical concept of change to Islam. He believed that Islam reached its religious and cultural epitome during the first two centuries of its existence. Internal factors then brought about an era where Islam was no longer in its growth state. Shari'ati claimed that Islam now needed external revitalization, not to be controlled by others through incursion, but rather envelop a new generation to bring about a neoteric genesis and revive Islam. This new generation, he asserted, would obtain knowledge of true Islam allowing it to reform according to the times.⁴³

In order to prove his view Shari'ati depicted the period of Islamic stagnation as the age of believing in superstitions and irrationality, a time when divine intervention was the norm. Thus, an individual perception of the world was generally a conservative religious view, one where man did not play a major role. Man was in a stage of unconsciousness and his awareness and determination about his role and status within the framework of society had been sacrificed for

the sake of providence.⁴⁴ Shari'ati asserted that the Islamic world of today inherited this predominant historical stage from the Islamic middle ages. Either educated Muslims accept the norm, which is a danger to further development of Islam, or they reject it, causing Islam to not have a political or economic place in Islamic society. Shari'ati suggested giving an analytical look at the Qur'an, using it as a guideline to formulate Islamic history in the hope that a new, attentive generation will be the external intrusion that Toynbee prescribed. Islam needs this external intrusion in order to continue its historical development.⁴⁵

Shari'ati once again re-examined the Qur'anic/biblical story of Cain and Abel, not only as symbols of two contrasting societies in which Abel represented pastoralism, but also in the respect that individual rights ought to be undermined for the sake of entirety. Cain symbolized the agrarian age where individual and economic monopoly were intertwined, and at the same time, set the stage for a permanent struggle between the followers of Cain and Abel over the economic and political hegemony of their societies.⁴⁶ He also looked at this story from humanistic and religious points of view by denoting that the murder of Abel destroyed the unity of humanity and replaced it with dissension in the human community. Shari'ati believed that both Cain and Abel inherited their father's (Adam) faith. Although Cain killed his brother, he never entirely rejected God and religion. Shari'ati claimed that one faith inherited by two brothers forms itself into two contrasting religions, one serving Cain's interests, while the other is based upon Abel's sincerity and truth.⁴⁷

Shari'ati furthermore indicated that since Abel was destroyed, his belief model weakened and Cain's principle became dominant. Cain killing his brother and incapacitating his father's faith was merely for personal gain. His heirs, eventually forming an elite class in history, managed to control the economic and political means of their societies for the same purpose as Cain; personal gain. Shari'ati believed that this elite class had three distinctive features: economic, political and religious. These features correspond to three main biblical/Qur'anic personalities: Pharaoh's characteristic of power, Aaron's symbol of wealth, and the clergy, representing religion. These three features always support each other throughout history protecting interests and maintaining control over the masses. Thus, Adam's true faith was replaced by a religion with self-serving representatives, better known as the clergy class. Shari'ati also indicated that with the death of Abel, the human community was divided into the two contrasting societies of pastoralists and agriculturalists and that religion similarly followed a path of two opposing poles.⁴⁸

In discussing his view of the two opposing poles of religion, Shari'ati elucidated that if Muslims understood the analytical dimension of Qur'anic examples, it would become clear to them that Cain's followers were the bourgeoisie, the political power, the very conservative clerics of today.⁴⁹ Hence, the task of a self-aware Muslim would be to prevent further stagnation of society, caused by self-absorbed followers of Cain. He suggested that the three main factors of *ijtihad* (independent judgment), *amr-e be ma'roof va n'hay az monkar* (admonition to good deeds and prohibition against performing bad deeds) and

mohâjerat (emigration) would be the cornerstones for responsible and self-conscious Muslims to use in the revival of the true aspects of the faith of Abel.⁵⁰ To Shari'ati, these sentient Muslims were Toynbee's external intrusion, needed to continue Islamic development.

On the issue of *ijtihad* (independent judgment), Shari'ati concurred with this Qur'anic verse that every nation is subject to historical changes;

And every nation hath its term, and when its term cometh, they cannot put it off an hour nor yet advance it.⁵¹

Shari'ati claimed that a society might be able to control or postpone historical change if it accepts new innovations. According to his view, *ijtihad* was the new innovation that laid the foundation for continuous development, referred to as a "permanent revolution."⁵² Not only could *ijtihad* play a crucial role in re-examining Qur'anic and Islamic principles in order to maintain its "permanent revolutionary" status, it should also embrace social, economic, and political proceedings. By broadening the scope of *ijtihad*, I believe that Shari'ati was taking one step closer to the idea of taking *ijtihad* out of the hands of the clergy class and offering it to the public. This approach very much resembled the way that Martin Luther revolted against the corruption of the Catholic Church by indicating that the way to salvation was through the bible, not by way of priests and church doctrines. In brief, Shari'ati believed that *ijtihad* was "a permanent revolution of thought in ideology."⁵³

With regard to the subject of *amr-e be ma'roof va n'hay az monkar*, Shari'ati was convinced that if every person, regardless of his status, followed Islamic moral and spiritual values, and felt responsible towards each other and

the society, they would automatically move their societies closer to the stage of permanent revolution.⁵⁴ There are ample examples in the Qur'an on evil-doing: "Approach not evils and indecencies whether manifest or hidden;"⁵⁵ or "moral conduct towards each other such as arrogant acts is considered an act of immorality; " "They were presumptuous in their hearts and were also very overbearing;"⁵⁶ on hate, wrong-doing, love of God, injustice, righteousness, welfare of others, adultery, economic justice, or other acts that would lead man to create an ideal society which is in a constant stage of development.

In his *Jahân- Bini va Ideology* (World-View and Ideology), Shari'ati examined the pattern of migration starting with the first hominids, continuing with the formation of the early civilizations, on to the crusades, ending with the development of the British colonies on the East coast of North America. His view derived the notion that the migration of groups of peoples always resulted in a birth of a new and dynamic civilization in history.⁵⁷ Shari'ati's view on migration takes on a new philosophical perspective and makes for interesting discussion. From this particular standpoint, he was not promoting the idea of a physical migration of a group of people or society from one geographical place to another, but rather, the transformation of a closed society tied to regressive and superstitious traditions, moving towards a new and open society that was willing to accept change and improvement. When a society undergoes this type of transformation, its world-view will be changed to that of an energetic and progressive one. According to Shari'ati, migration, as the cause of an advancement of a society, needed a cause and an active agent in order to

advance. The cause is the willingness to avert the elements and irrational aspects of tradition that have kept it captive. The active agent is the application of technology and the changes that follow, including a comprehensive view of the encompassing world. Shari'ati also asserted that if a society was willing to make this upward progressive migration, it would then enter into a stage of cultural renaissance and religious reformation, providing the catalyst for a "permanent revolution."⁵⁸

c. Society (*Jāme'a*)

Shari'ati asserted that *jahân-bini* as the foundation of Islamic ideology, defined society beyond its conventional meaning of an institution and culture of a specific group of people. To Shari'ati, an authentic Islam's goal was to lay the foundation of an archetype society that would be suitable for an (*ensân*).⁵⁹ He believed that two types of societies existed: closed and open.

A closed society was one in which social, economic, and political movements were slow and the society was encircled with specific aspects of tradition.⁶⁰ Shari'ati gave examples of Islamic societies of the nineteenth century and the movement of pan-Islamists such as Jamâl al-Din al-Afghâni (1838/9-1897) and Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) who ventured to break the circle of stagnation that prevented Islamic societies from achieving upward progress. However, he maintained that their attempts to bring about reform were not very successful due to their association with the political and religious elite, who, themselves, were the manifestation of degeneration. Hence, both of these

Islamicists have ignored the masses, especially the young generation and the intellectuals, who were the catalysts for any substantial change in their societies. Shari'ati suggested that their failure was due to the lack of reliance on the Qur'an as the source of upward movement in a traditional Islamic society. I believe Shari'ati meant that the dynamism of the Qur'an, as the foundation of Islam, could be interpreted in a scientific way, bringing the movement of thought and action towards a common goal, that of a new society with a reformed religion.⁶¹

Shari'ati asserted that no society could ever reach a degree of self-awareness and progress if it is captive to its decadent traditional value. Hence, change would not occur if its thought, soul, and social values were stagnant and the society had no intention of embracing developmental change. He gave the historical illustration of the European transition from Feudalism to the eventual social, religious, political and economic success, as the result of how Europeans distanced themselves from the conventional values of Catholicism in the Middle Ages.⁶² Thus, Europe entered into an open society that was eager to accept economic, political, and social modifications. Shari'ati also believed that an open society was a living entity with a conscience and that the environmental, economic, social, political and religious institutions were its relevant characteristics. However, the most vital element of its existence was its cells (people, as in aware individuals), not just a collection of persons.⁶³ Hence, the utmost important aspect of an open society is its members' sincerity to embrace appropriate social, religious, economic, and political reforms, gradually leading them towards the collective goal of prosperity and equality for all. Shari'ati

referred to this open society as *ummah*, derived from the Arabic root of *amm*, meaning path and intention, as previously discussed.⁶⁴ Perhaps, what Shari'ati had in mind was an egalitarian society that had been established in Medina by prophet Muhammad after 632 C.E.

Shari'ati asserted that like any other society, *ummah* ought to have an economic foundation based upon Abel's system, a system where ownership belonged to the society as a whole, where human equality and brotherhood was its main concern.⁶⁵ Its political leadership would be unique since it would rely heavily on the purity of a committed, responsible revolutionary leadership. Leadership was accountable for the upward movement and advancement of *ummah*, based upon Islamic ideology with world-view as its foundation. Hence, leadership ought to accomplish the divine intention of creating ideal humans.⁶⁶ In brief, *ummah* was an ideal society where its members were free and exemplary and their goal was to make *ummah* a reality.

I conclude that Shari'ati's *jahân-bini* was based upon *tawhid*, the concept of believing in a self-aware, rational and powerful creator that governed the universe according to the laws of nature. God's aim in creating man was to have a perfect vicegerent on earth in order to establish a universal and ideal human community. However, historical events prevented man from becoming the ideal human as God had intended. Therefore, what an *ensân* longed for was to find his true nature on earth. I also believe that Shari'ati's Islam is an ideology that furnishes opportunities for its followers to achieve their goal of perfection and creating an ideal society that will produce ideal Muslims directed towards God.

Conclusion

A close analytical look at Shari'ati's writings leaves no doubt in this author's mind that his views of history, society, economy, culture, identity, and strategies for a future Islamic revolution, had a tremendous impact on the younger generation, often university students, in the assembly of the 1979 Iranian Revolution. His determination and unparalleled conviction to an Islamic ideology made his audiences and readers reaffirm their faith and share in his vision to establish an Islamic state. It could also be claimed that, to some extent, Shari'ati single-handedly managed to cast aside the dormant shadow of static Islam, presenting Iranians with a new revolutionary Islam. He also hoped that his version of a dynamic Islam would become an example for other Islamic societies to follow. He furthermore hoped that Islam could become a viable international force that would confront dominant Western ideologies.

It is this author's opinion that without Shari'ati's sincere pursuit of his dream and the preparation of a politicized Islam, the popularity of Ayatollah Khomeini, Shi'ism as a religion of protest, and the 1979 Iranian Revolution would have been postponed. However, a distinction should be made between the personality and ideologies of Shari'ati and Khomeini. Shari'ati was young, articulate, well educated, and well aware of the evolution and relevance of existing Western ideologies, in practice and in theory. He advocated a universal Islamic revolt against all the dictatorial regimes in the Islamic world and hoped to

replace them with divine justice. On the other hand, Khomeini was an old master with a traditional scholarly background, whose aim was to destroy the Pahlavi regime and reestablish it with a Shi'ite theocracy that would spread into Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Lebanon. In slight contrast, Shari'ati envisioned Shi'ism as a complete political party and the heir to the true Islam of the Prophet. He hoped that other Muslims would regard it as an evolutionary model that possessed all ideological theories needed to challenge already established governments of the Islamic world. This is why he claimed that the Shi'ite form of Islam was the only solution to mainstream conservatism.

It is true that the recognition of Islam as a political force was not something new in the political history of Iran. It was, however, Shari'ati's version of politicized Islam that had such an important impact on the emergence of Islamic revivalism in Iran during the 1960's and particularly, in the 1970's. A well-known group of these Islamic revivalists was the Sâzeman-e Mojâhidin-e Khalq-e Iran (Organization of the Iranian People's Warriors), who claimed that Islam was the only ideology able to mobilize the masses for a revolutionary struggle. Some of their subject matter, such as, revolution, martyrdom, resistance, classless society (nezâm-e tawhidi) and the interpretation of the Qur'an, seemed to have come directly from Shari'ati's writings. It is thus, easy to claim that Shari'ati's language had special appeal to the young generation and that the old version of Islam, used by the clergy class, did not have the vitality needed to generate a mass uprising against the Pahlavi regime.

Perhaps looking briefly into some Iranian scholars' views on Shari'ati's ideology of Islam and his impact on the younger generation of Iran would be the best way to examine the effects of Shari'ati's thoughts and philosophy in post revolutionary Iran. Concurring with Mehdi Bazargân, the first prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran after the 1979 Revolution, I can state that although the events of Iran since the revolution have not been what Shari'ati desired them to be, no one can deny his important historical role in the victory of the revolution. I also believe that it was Shari'ati's Islamic ideology that permanently cemented a relationship between his thoughts and the young generation.¹ Furthermore, the importance of Shari'ati's view on Islam had two aspirations. First, it helped to portray Islam as a force against dictatorships and imperialism and advocate for a return to cultural self. Secondly, it helped to reform and refine Islam from its superstitious nature and relieve it of its stagnancy. In short, he tried to replace the "Safavid Shi'ism" with the "Alid Shi'ism."² On the issue of cultural self, I am totally in agreement with Kazem Sâmî who describes Shari'ati as a mentor, introducing the concept of a return to cultural self to a generation who had become unfamiliar with his/her own culture and history. He also asserts that Shari'ati breathed new life into an Islam where the aim of the clergy class was to maintain the status quo and prevent any new or progressive interpretation of the Qur'an or Islamic ideology.³

I also believe that Shari'ati's role in the revival of Islamic ideology put him in the same circle as that of other great Islamic pioneers such as, Muhammad Iqbâl, Jamal Ad-Din al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh, and Abd al-Rahman al-

Kawakibi, who had also attempted to breathe a dynamic life anew into Islam.⁴

One should not forget that it was Shari'ati who introduced and taught the Iranian political thinkers the scientific approaches to understanding the Qur'an.⁵ On the topic of an ideal Islamic society, Husayn Yousafi Oshkouri indicates that Shari'ati's thoughts and ideas left no doubt in the minds of Muslims around the world that the revival of a true Islamic society is conceivable.⁶

It should be also noted that some Iranian scholars compared Shari'ati to al-Ghazali, who also revealed true Islam to his generation of followers. They also believe that Shari'ati's thoughts and ideals should be regarded as the bridge that connected the earlier time period to the later time period.⁷ It is also deemed that Shari'ati's approach to a constructive Islam paved the way for the intellectuals of the Islamic world to realize that their cultural awareness is the key to the preservation of their identity.⁸

Abdul Karim Soroush describes that after the 1979 Revolution, some political leaders claimed they were the students of the Shari'ati school of thought and ideology, but in reality, they had tried to connect themselves to him in order to gain power. Soroush claims that Shari'ati had no desire to advocate for a revolution without its participants being well aware of their historical place and role in that revolution.⁹ In analyzing the current Iranian political situation, he states that it was Shari'ati's unprecedented approach to a reconstructed Islam that has allowed some Ulama influenced by Shari'ati's ideas and thoughts, to challenge the nature of the present conservative dominated government of Iran.¹⁰

Like Shari'ati, they advocate that Islamic culture possesses every aspect of a progressive society and that it needs to be discovered, promoted and utilized.¹¹

I believe it would be proper to indicate why Shari'ati's views and ideas about reconstructed Islam had more appeal to a younger rather than older generation, in particular, his ardent critics, the clergy class. Islam, like any other monotheistic religion has two characteristics: its essence, which is divinely inspired with commandments for people to follow, and its existence that has been shaped according to different social, economic, political and historical events. Shari'ati attempted to examine the external events that influenced the historical direction of Islam from a sociological point of view. However, he did not realize that the essence of Islam has its own autonomous sphere based upon its divine truth as revealed to prophet Muhammad for implementation among his followers. Perhaps the best analogy is that of body and soul. The body is intertwined with the soul and dependent upon one another. Similarly, one cannot comprehend the existence of Islam without understanding its essence. I believe that Shari'ati ignored the essence of Islam by relying heavily on external factors, therefore alienating the clergy class, who by means of their scholarly training were the interpreters of the divine truth; the essence.

Endnotes

Introduction

- ¹ Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*. (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 464.
- ² Ibid., p. 466.
- ³ Ali Shari'ati, *On the sociology of Islam*. Translated by Hamid Algar. (Berkley, California: Mizan Press, 1979), p. 34.
- ⁴ Ali Shari'ati, *Marxism and Other Western Fallacies: An Islamic Critique*. Translated by R. Campbell. (Berkley, California: Mizan Press, 1980), p. 7.
- ⁵ Ali Hojati Kermani, "Shenâkht-e Shakhssiyyat-e Momtâz-e Dokto Ali Shari'ati va Naghsh-e Hassâs-e Vey dar Ehyâye Taffakor-e Eslâmi (Recognizing the Distinguished Character of Doctor Ali Shari'ati and His Sensitive Role in Revival of the Islamic Thought)" in J'afer Saeedi ed. *Shakhssiyyat va Andish-e Doktor Ali Shari'ati* (Character and the Ideas of Doctor Ali Shari'ati), p. 35.
- ⁶ Ali Shari'ati, *Kavir (Desert)* (Mashhad, Iran: Enteshârât-e Toos, 1349/1970), pp. 88-89.
- ⁷ Ali Shari'ati, *Bâ Mokhâtabha-ye Ashenâ (To the Acquainted Speakers)* (Majmou'eh, Vol. 1) (Tehran: Enteshârât-e Chapbakhsh, 1377/1998), p. 34.
- ⁸ Shari'ati, *Kavir (Desert)*, p. 89.
- ⁹ See Ali Shari'ati, *Gofteh-Goo-Ha-ye Tanha'ie* (Dialogues of Solitude) (Tehran: Enteshârât-e Mona, 1362/1983), p. 5.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 7-8.
- ¹¹ See J'afer Saeedi ed. *Shakhssiyyat va Andish-e Doktor Ali Shari'ati* (Character and the Ideas of Doctor Ali Shari'ati) (Tehran: Enteshârât-e Chapbakhsh, 1376/1997), pp. 256-258.
- ¹² See Ali Shari'ati, *Gofteh-Goo-Ha-ye Tanha'ie* (Dialogues of Solitude), pp. 136-137.
- ¹³ Ibid., pp. 74-77.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., p. 56.
- ¹⁵ Shari'ati, *Gofteh-Goo-Ha-ye Tanha'ie* (Dialogues of Solitude), p. 2.
- ¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 357-358.
- ¹⁷ See Sharough Akhavi, *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1980), pp. 143-144.
- ¹⁸ See J'afer Saeedi ed. *Shakhssiyyat va Andish-e Doktor Ali Shari'ati* (Character and Ideas of Doctor Ali Shari'ati), pp. 259-260.
- ¹⁹ See Sharough Akhavi, *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran*, p.145.

Chapter One

¹ For more detail information about the ideology and tactics of the *Sazemân-e Cherikhâ-ye Feda'i-ye Khalq-e Iran* (The Organization of the Iranian People's Devotee Guerrillas), see Bijan Jazani, *Armed Struggle in Iran: The Road to Mobilization of the Masses* (London: The Gulf Committee, 1976). On the other Marxists-Leninists and Maoists Organizations, see Ervand Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 480-488. Mohsen Milani, *The Making of Iran's Islamic Revolution: From Monarchy to Islamic Republic* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1988), 135-138, and Fred Halliday, *Iran, Dictatorship and Development* (London: Penguin Books, 1979), 231 and 326.

² For further information on *Sâzemân-e Mojâhedîn-e Khalq-e Iran* (Organization of the Iranian People's Warriors) and other Islamic armed struggle, see Abrahamian, *Radical Islam: The Iranian Mojahedin* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1989). See also Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*, 481-482. Also Ali Gheissari, *Iranian Intellectuals in the 20th Century* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), 107-108.

³ Shâdmân was born into a clerical family in Tehran, after finishing his primary school; he continued his secondary education at Dâr al-Fonoun. His higher education began at Teacher's Training College and then at School of Law at Tehran University and finally earned a doctoral degree from the London University. He taught Persian at London University's School of Oriental and African Studies. Islamic civilization and philosophy of history were courses that he mostly taught at Tehran.

⁴ Seyyed Fakhr al-Din Shâdmân, *Taskhir-e Tammadon-e Farangi* (The Conquest of Western Civilization), (Tehran: Châpkhân-ye Iran, 1948), 4.

⁵ Ibid., 24.

⁶ Ibid., 56.

⁷ Ibid., 30.

⁸ Ibid., 56.

⁹ Ibid., 13.

¹⁰ Ibid., 11.

¹¹ For further information on Al-e Ahmad's biography, see Jalâl Al-e Ahmad, *"Masalan Sharhe Ahvâlât"* (My So-Called Autobiography) and in Jalâl Al-e Ahmad, *Yek Châh va Du Châleh* (One Well and Two Pits) (Tehran: n.p. 1343/1964).

¹² For more detailed information on Al-e Ahmad's view on the West, see Jalâl Al-e Ahmad, *Gharbzadegi* (the state of being struck by the West) (Tehran: Ravâq, 1345/1962); also Jalâl Al-e Ahmad, *Occidentosis: A Plague From the West*. Translated by R. Campbell, annotations and introduction by Hamid Algar (Berkeley, Calif.: Mizan Press, 1984). Also Roy Mottahedeh, *The Mantle of the Prophet: Religion and Politics in Iran* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985), pp. 287-315.

¹³ For further information on the role of Ulama in revival of the Iranian identity, see Jalâl Al-e Ahmad, *Dar Khedmat va Khiânat-e Rowshanfekrân* (The Intellectuals: How they serve or Betray Their Country). 2 vols. (Tehran: Khârazmî, 1357/1978).

¹⁴ Ali Shari'ati, *Cheh Bâyard Kard?* (What is to Be Done?) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 20) (Tehran, 1360/1982), pp. 52-53.

¹⁵ Shari'ati, *Bâzgasht* (Return) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 4) (Tehran: Hoseiniyeh Ershâd, 1361/1982), p.148.

¹⁶ Shari'ati, *Cheh Bâyard Kard?* (What is to Be Done?) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 20), pp. 54-55

¹⁷ Ibid., p.255.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 56.

¹⁹ In this comparison between the prophets and *rwoshanfekrân* Shari'ati has no intention to equate one to another. He, however, asserts that the prophets were not philosophers, scholars, or the writers. They have risen from the people or if they have not, they went to people with new vision and ideas to energize them toward changes in their belief, life and culture. See Shari'ati, *Cheh Bâyard Kard?* (What is to Be Done?) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 20), pp. 256.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 257-258.

²¹ Ibid., p. 259.

²² Ibid., pp. 261-262.

²³ Shari'ati, *Bâzgasht* (Return) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 4), pp. 256-258.

²⁴ See Shari'ati, *Cheh Bâyard Kard?* (What is to Be Done?) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 20), pp. 200-201.

²⁵ Ali Shari'ati, *Khud-sâzi-e Enqelâbi* (Revolutionary Reconstruction of the Self) (Majmou'eh, vol. 2) (Tehran: Hoseiniyeh Ershâd, 1356/1977), p. 151.

²⁶ Ali Shari'ati, *Shi'eh* (Shi'ite) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 7) (Tehran: Elham, 1376/1997), p. 90. See also Shari'ati, *Khud-sâzi-e Enqelâbi* (Revolutionary Reconstruction of the Self) (Majmou'eh, vol. 2), p. 151.

²⁷ Shari'ati, *Khud-sâzi-e Enqelâbi* (Revolutionary Reconstruction of the Self) (Majmou'eh, vol.), p. 151. See also Shari'ati, *Husein Vâres-e Adam* (Hosein, the Successor of Adam) (Majmou'eh, vol. 19) (Tehran: Qalam, 1375/1996), p. 341.

²⁸ Shari'ati, *Khud-sâzi-e Enqelâbi* (Revolutionary Reconstruction of the Self) (Majmou'eh, vol.), p. 152.

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 153-156.

³⁰ Qur'an, 53:39-40.

³¹ Shari'ati, *Khud-sâzi-e Enqelâbi* (Revolutionary Reconstruction of the Self) (Majmou'eh, vol.), p. 158.

³² Ibid., pp. 159-160.

³³ Ibid., p. 161.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 164-169.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 172.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 173-175.

³⁷ Shari'ati, *Cheh Bâyard Kard?* (What is to Be Done?) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 20), pp. 68-69.

³⁸ For further information on the issue of return to an Islamic culture see Shari'ati, *Bâzgasht* (Return) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 4), pp. 13-33.

³⁹ Shari'ati, *Khud-sâzi-e Enqelâbi* (Revolutionary Reconstruction of the Self) (Majmou'eh, vol.), pp. 177-180.

⁴⁰ For further information regarding this issue, see Shari'ati, *Cheh Bâyard Kard?* (What is to Be Done?) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 20), pp. 84-85.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 262-263.

⁴² Ibid., p. 100.

⁴³ For further reference to this issue see Shari'ati *Makhrot-e Jâme'a Shenâsi-e Farhangi* (Spheroidal Structure of Cultural Sociology) (Solon, Ohio: Muslim Association of America, 1358/1979), pp. 4-7.

⁴⁴ Ibid., P. 9-43.

⁴⁵ Shari'ati, *Bâzgasht* (Return) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 4), pp. 13-17.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 19.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 29-30.

⁴⁸ For further information on the issue of the ancient/Persian "self" see Shari'ati, *Bâzgasht* (Return) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 4), pp. 316-323.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 31.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 32-33.

⁵¹ For further discussion on this issue, see Shari'ati *Marxism and Other Western Fallacies: An Islamic Critique*. Translated by R. Campbell. (Berkeley: California, Mizan Press, 1980).

⁵² For more detail information see Shari'ati, *Bâzgasht* (Return) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 4), pp. 59-86.

⁵³ Ibid., pp. 89-95.

⁵⁴ Shari'ati, *Cheh Bâyard Kard?* (What is to Be Done?) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 20), pp. 280-293.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 293-295 and also pp. 373-379.

⁵⁶ Hoseiniyeh Ershâd was an Islamic institution and a lecture hall created by way of religious endowment to espouse scientific inquiries for different types of Islamic lecture, discussion, and research.

⁵⁷ Shari'ati, *Cheh Bāyad Kard?* (What is to Be Done?) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 20), pp. 387-388 and for more detail information on the aim of these organizations see also Ibid., pp. 391-472.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p.384-385.

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 385-386.

Chapter Two

- ¹ For further information on development of Shi'ism, see S.Husain.M. Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam* (London: Longman, 1979), pp. 174-197.
- ² For further information on Kulayni's view on *imân* see Muhammad ibn Ya'qûb Kulayni al-Râzi, *Usûl al-Kâfi* Translated to Persian by J. Mustafavi (Tehran, n. d.), 38-45.
- ³ For further information, see Jafri, *Origins and Early Development of Shi'a Islam*. pp. 213-214 and 309
- ⁴ For further information on the developments of the Shi'ite doctrine of *ijtihâd* and *taqlid* see Said Amir Arjomand, *The Shadow of God and the Hidden Imâm: Religion, Political Order, and Social Change in Shi'ite Iran from the Beginning to 1890*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 138-142.
- ⁵ Ali Shari'ati, *Shi'a Hezb-e Tamâm* (Shi'ite a Complete Party) (Tehran: n.p., , 1351/1972), pp. 40-41.
- ⁶ Ibid., p. 41.
- ⁷ See Ali Shari'ati *Ummat va Imâmât* (An Ideal Islamic Society and Divinely Inspired Leadership) (Tehran: n.p., n.d.), pp. 36-39.
- ⁸ Ibid., p. 39.
- ⁹ Shari'ati, *Shi'a Hezb-e Tamâm* (Shi'ite a Complete Party), pp. 42-45.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., 46-47.
- ¹¹ Qur'an, 2:134.
- ¹² Shari'ati, *Shi'a Hezb-e Tamâm* (Shi'ite a Complete Party), pp. 35-36.
- ¹³ Qur'an, 2:143.
- ¹⁴ For further information, see Shari'ati, *Shi'a Hezb-e Tamâm* (Shi'ite a Complete Party), pp. 55-56 and Qur'an, 2:142-143.
- ¹⁵ Shari'ati, *Shi'a Hezb-e Tamâm* (Shi'ite a Complete Party), p. 57.
- ¹⁶ Qur'an, 34:28.
- ¹⁷ Qur'an, 7:181.
- ¹⁸ Qur'a, 3:110.
- ¹⁹ Shari'ati, *Shi'a Hezb-e Tamâm* (Shi'ite a Complete Party), p. 81.
- ²⁰ Ibid., p. 145.
- ²¹ Qur'an, 3:21.
- ²² Shari'ati, *Shi'a Hezb-e Tamâm* (Shi'ite a Complete Party), pp. 45-46.

²³ See Shari'ati, *Ummat va Imâmât* (An Ideal Islamic Society and Divinely Inspired Leadership), pp. 76-79. Also Shar'ati, *Husayn Vârese-e Âdam* (Husayn, the Successor of Adam) (*Majmou'eh*, Vol. 19) (Tehran: Qalam, 1375/1996), pp. 90-91.

²⁴ Ali Shari'ati, *Ali Bonian Gozâr-e Vahdat* (Ali Founder of Unity) (Tehran: Nasr Publication, n.d), p. 45.

²⁵ Shari'ati, *Shi'a Hezb-e Tamâm* (Shi'ite a Complete Party), p. 65.

²⁶ Shari'ati, *Ali Bonian Gozâr-e Vahdat* (Ali Founder of Unity), p. 44.

²⁷ Qur'an, 3:104.

²⁸ Shar'ati, *Husayn Vârese-e Âdam* (Husayn, the Successor of Adam), p. 115.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 135.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 148-150.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 186-192.

³² Ibid., p. 151. For full text of this letter, see Abu Ja'far At Tabari, *Ta'rikh ar-Rusul wa'l Muluk* (The History of Prophets and Kings) Vol. XIX. Translated and annotated by I. K. A. Howard (New York: State University of New York Press, 1984), p. 23.

³³ Shar'ati, *Husayn Vârese-e Âdam* (Husayn, the Successor of Adam), p. 152.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 153-163. For full text of this letter see also At Tabari, *Ta'rikh ar-Rusul wa'l Muluk* (The History of Prophets and Kings) Vol. XIX, pp. 25-26.

³⁵ The full text would make Shari'ati's argument easier to comprehend. See At-Tabari *Ta'rikh ar-Rusul wa'l Muluk* (The History of Prophets and Kings) Vol. XIX, pp. 31-32.

³⁶ Shar'ati, *Husayn Vârese-e Âdam* (Husayn, the Successor of Adam), pp. 135-136.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 134.

³⁸ Ibid., pp. 140-145.

³⁹ Ibid., 148.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 148-151.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 153.

⁴² Ibid., p. 172.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 171.

⁴⁴ For further information on the issue of *shaheed* see Shar'ati, *Husayn Vârese-e Âdam* (Husayn, the Successor of Adam), pp. 211-215.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 216-219.

⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 219-222.

⁴⁷ For further information on this topic, see Ali Shari'ati, *Ejtihād va Nazariyeh Enghelāb-e Eslāmi* (The Independent Interpretation of Islamic Laws and a View on The Permanent Revolution) (Tehran: Qalam publication, n.d.), pp. 28-29. Also, see Shari'ati, *Ummat va Imāmate* (An Ideal Islamic Society and Divinely Inspired Leadership), pp. 150-167.

⁴⁸ For further information on the comparison between the two types of Shi'ism see, Ali Shari'ati, *Tashayyo-e Alavi va Tashayyo-e Safavi* (Shi'ite of Alavi and The Shi'ite of Safavi) (Tehran: Hoseiniyeh Ershād, 1350/1971), pp. 320-326. Also Sharough Akhavi, *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1980), pp. 231-233. Also Nikki R. Keddi *Roots of Revolution: An Interpretive History of Modern Iran* (New York: Yale University Press, 1981), pp. 218-220.

⁴⁹ Shari'ati, *Ummat va Imāmate* (An Ideal Islamic Society and Divinely Inspired Leadership), p. 138.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 139.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 149.

⁵² Ibid., p. 173.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 177.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 180.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 181-200.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 202.

Chapter Three

- ¹ Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini va Ideology* (Worldview and Ideology), pp. 42-43.
- ² Ibid., p. 41.
- ³ Shari'ati, *Shenâkht va Târikh-e Adlân* (Recognition and History of Religions), pp. 269-271.
- ⁴ Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini Va Ideology* (Worldview and Ideology), p. 41.
- ⁵ Qur'an, 112:1-4.
- ⁶ Due to numerous revelations in the Qur'an dealing with Tawhid and the attributes of God, it would require several pages to cite them all. Hence, several are mentioned without allocating an endnote for each. Those quoted in this endnote are in order : Qur'an, 16:22, 4:171, 51:51, 16:2, and 23:91. Other related Qur'anic verses on the same issues are: 3:18, 4:172, 39:62-63, 30:11, 26-27 and 189, 87:2-3, 20:50, 53:42 and 44, 23:88, 21:33, 36:37-40, 13:2, 40:3, and 1:1-3.
- ⁷ Shari'ati, *Islâm-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. I, p. 35 and see, also Shari'ati, *On the Sociology of Islam*, translated by Hamid Algar (Berkeley: California, Mizan Press, 1979), p. 82.
- ⁸ Shari'ati, *Islâm-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. I, p. 36-37.
- ⁹ Shari'ati believes that Cain and Abel depict the emergence of the two contrasting societies of pastoralism and agrarian. Abel represented the pastoral way of life, a form of primitive socialism that rejects individual ownership for the sake of totality. Cain, on the other hand, is the symbol of the agrarian life-style, which promotes the idea of monopoly ownership. Hence, permanent hostilities were inaugurated with Cain and Abel and ensued throughout history. For a full account see Shari'ati, *Islâm-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. I, pp. 50-63.
- ¹⁰ Shari'ati, *Islâm-Shenâsi* (Islamology), pp. 82-83.
- ¹¹ For further information on Socrates view on virtue and wisdom see, Zeller, *Socrates and the Socratic School* (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1962), pp. 141-148.
- ¹² Shari'ati, *Islâm-Shenâsi* (Islamology), p. 84.
- ¹³ Qur'an, 23:51.
- ¹⁴ Qur'an, 7:32.
- ¹⁵ Qur'an, 6:152.
- ¹⁶ Qur'an, 11:115.
- ¹⁷ Qur'an, 3:115.
- ¹⁸ Qur'an, 42:40 and 42.
- ¹⁹ For further information on love see Qur'an, 2:166, 17:24-25, 31:15, 46:16, 4:37-38, and 66:7.
- ²⁰ Qur'an, 5:8.
- ²¹ Qur'an, 69:9.

²² For further information on the causes of corruption, see Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. I, pp. 299-300.

²³ In dividing social order from the historical perspective, Shari'ati once again relies on the biblical story of Cain and Abel as a representation of the pastoral and agrarian societies. He follows this historical process into the age of feudalism, capitalism, and imperialism.

²⁴ Shari'ati, *Ravesh-e Shenâkht-e Islâm* (Method of Recognizing Islam) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 28) (Tehran: Entesharât-e Châpakhsh, 1377/1998), pp. 613-618.

²⁵ See Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), Vol.1, P. 68.

²⁶ Qur'an, 64:17.

²⁷ Qur'an, 114:1-3.

²⁸ For further references on Zakah see Qur'an, 2:43, 22:78, 23:4, 24:56, and also 57:18. Also Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), Vol.III. p. 331.

²⁹ Shari'ati, *Shi'eh* (Si'ism), P. 207.

³⁰ See Shari'ati, *Ensân* (The Ideal Human) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 24) (Tehran: Entesharât-e Elhâm, 1376/1997), P. 124.

³¹ See Ali Shari'ati, *Islām-shenâsi* (Islamology) (Mashhad: Tous, 1347/1969), pp. 18-24. This volume of *Islām-Shenâsi* should not be confused, however with three volumes of *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology) presented as a series of lectures at Huseiniyeh Ershâd (an Islamic institution and a lecture hall dedicated to Islamic ideology and issues) and first published in 1981.

³² For further information on the hostilities between Cain and Abel, See Old Testament, Genesis 4:1-15 and Qur'an, 5:30-34. For its historical interpretation, see Shari'ati, *Falsafeh Târikh, Hâbil-Qâbil* (Philosophy of History, Cain-Abel) in *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology) (Tehran: Qalam Publishers, 1375/1995), vol. I, pp. 50-63; also Shari'ati, *Bazgasht* (Return). (Tehran: Huseiniyeh Ershâd, n.d.), pp. 375-381.

³³ Shari'ati, *Falsafeh Târikh, Hâbil-Qâbil* (Philosophy of History, Cain-Abel) in *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. I, pp. 52-53. See also Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini va Ideology* (World-View and Ideology) (Tehran: Sherekateh Inteshâr, 1374/1995), pp. 23-27.

³⁴ Shari'ati, *Islâm Cheest?* (What Is Islam?) (Ohio: Muslim Students Association (M.S.A.), 1358/1979), pp. 5-7.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

³⁶ Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. I, p. 34.

³⁷ Qur'an, 93:1-2.

³⁸ Qur'an, 4:1.

³⁹ For further information, see Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), p. 35; Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini va Ideology* (World view and Ideology), p. 204; Qur'an, 2:213.

⁴⁰ Qur'an, 2:187.

⁴¹ Qur'an, 2:223.

⁴² Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), p. 37.

⁴³ Qur'an, 2:256.

⁴⁴ Qur'an, 2:62.

⁴⁵ Qur'an, 29:46.

⁴⁶ Qur'an, 16:125.

⁴⁷ Qur'an, 73:10.

⁴⁸ Qur'an, 23:67.

⁴⁹ Qur'an, 42:38.

⁵⁰ The issue of *shurâ* seems to be an important topic for Shari'ati. A whole lecture, *Selection and/or Election*, was devoted to the topic. See Shari'ati, *Intekhâb Va/Yâ Intesâb* (Selection and/or Election) (Ohio: M.S.A. , 1358/1979), p. 5.

⁵¹ Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), p. 148.

⁵² Qur'an, 74:38.

⁵³ Qur'an, 99:7-8.

⁵⁴ Qur'an, 10:45.

⁵⁵ Qur'an, 10:53.

⁵⁶ Qur'an, 10:60.

⁵⁷ Qur'an, 11:45-46.

⁵⁸ Cited from Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), p. 41.

⁵⁹ Qur'an, 96:1-5. For further discussion of this particular verse, see also Shari'ati, *Shenâkht va Târikh-e Adiân* (Recognition and History of Religions) (Tehran: Inteshârat-e Alborz, n.d.), pp. 210-212.

⁶⁰ Qur'an, 68:1.

⁶¹ Qur'an, 31:27.

⁶² For further information on this issue, see Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. I, pp. 22-25.

⁶³ Cited from Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), p. 42

⁶⁴ For further discussion on the issue of Christianity and the Roman Empire, see Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini va ideology* (Worldview and Ideology), pp. 50-52.

⁶⁵ Cited in Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), pp. 44-45.

- ⁶⁶ Ibid., 46.
- ⁶⁷ Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. I, pp. 110-111.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 68-69.
- ⁶⁹ Qur'an, 13:11. See also Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. III, pp. 147-149.
- ⁷⁰ Qur'an, 2:134.
- ⁷¹ Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), p. 53.
- ⁷² Ibid., pp. 55-60.
- ⁷³ For the entire verses, in order, see Qur'an, 3:137, 30:9 and 30:42.
- ⁷⁴ Both verses are from the same chapter, Qur'an, 7:31 and 7:32.
- ⁷⁵ Qur'an, 60:8-9.
- ⁷⁶ For more detailed information about Shari'ati's view on this issue, see Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. II, pp. 269-271.
- ⁷⁷ Shari'ati, *Bazgasht* (Return), p. 362.
- ⁷⁸ Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), pp. 65-67. For domination of religion over people see also Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. I, pp. 226-228.
- ⁷⁹ Qur'an, 29:45.
- ⁸⁰ Qur'an, 7:6.
- ⁸¹ Qur'an, 2:177.
- ⁸² Qur'an, 9:19.
- ⁸³ For further discussion on this issue see Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. II, pp. 65-66; Shari'ati, *Shi'eh* (Shi'ism) (Majmou'eh, Vol. 7) (Tehran: Elhâm, 1362/1983), pp. 249-250; Shari'ati, *Cheh Bâyard Kard?* (What Is to Be Done?) (Tehran: Elhâm, 1362/1983), pp. 392-404.

Chapter Four

¹ Ronald B. Levinson, ed., *A Plato Reader*. (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1967), pp. X-XI.

² Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Plato's Dialectical Ethics*, Trans. by Robert M. Wallace. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 202-203.

³ *Ibid.*, 203.

⁴ Shari'ati, *Culture and Ideology* Trans. by Fatollah Marjani. (Houston: Free Islamic Literatures, Inc., 1980), p. 15-16.

⁵ Regarding Socrates' Sophia, we have described it from the perspective of virtue. By virtue, a person can attain and distinguish between good and evil knowledge, which ultimately guides him towards self-knowledge or self-awareness. See also, Shari'ati, *Shenâkht va Târikh-e Adiân* (Recognition and The History of Religions.) (Tehran: Inteshârât-e Alborz, n.d), pp. 206-207.

⁶ For full text of this verse, see Qur'an, 5: 16-17.

⁷ Qur'an, 2: 257.

⁸ For further information, see, Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini va Ideology* (World-View and Ideology), or *Majmou'eh-ye Asâr* (Collected Works.) Vol. 35. (Tehran: Sherekat-e Sahâmi-ye Inteshâr, 1374/1992), pp. 180-181.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 182-183.

¹⁰ There are ample examples about the creation of the universe and humans in the Qur'an. However, for further details, see, Qur'an, 14: 9, 16: 16, 23: 78-80, 56: 69-71.

¹¹ Qur'an, 32: 7-9.

¹² For further information on the issue of *bashar* see, Shari'ati, *Chahâr Zendân-e Ensân* (Four Prisons of Mankind). (Solon, Ohio: Muslim Association of America, 1358/1979), pp. 100-104.

¹³ *Ibid.* , 104-105.

¹⁴ See the Qur'an, 2: 46 and 2: 156.

¹⁵ The concept "becomes one with God" constitutes the ultimate goal and wish of every Sufi. A Sufi normally belongs to an order that is the binding relationship of master (Murshid) and disciple (Murid). It is by way of this relationship that a disciple would be guided, through a succession of stages, to outline a way of thought, feeling and action, in order to experience Divine Reality (Hqiqah); to become one with Him.

¹⁶ See, Shari'ati, *Chahâr Zendân-e Ensân* (Four Prisons of Mankind), p. 105.

¹⁷ Shari'ati's view of the characteristics of *ensân* differs from his early writing. In his *Shenâkht Va Târikh-e Adiân* (Recognition and The History of Religions, pp. 246-249) he describes that *ensân* possesses three dimensions; Awareness, Liberty, and Ability for being Creator. However, we will use his more developed view, which details more aptly, what the characteristics of *ensân* should be. See, Shari'ati, *Chahâr Zendân-e Ensân* (Four Prisons of Mankind), 105.

¹⁸ Shari'ati, *Chahâr Zendân-e Ensân* (Four Prisons of Mankind), p. 106.

- ¹⁹ Ibid., 107 and for the full account of the fall of Adam from paradise see Qur'an, 7: 19-27.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 108.
- ²¹ Qur'an, 7:23.
- ²² Qur'an, 95:5.
- ²³ Qur'an, 96:6-8.
- ²⁴ Shari'ati, *Chahâr Zendân-e Ensân* (Four Prisons of Mankind), p. 109.
- ²⁵ Shari'ati, *Shenâkht va Târikh-e Adiân* (Recognition and The History of Religions), pp. 246-247.
- ²⁶ Ibid., 248.
- ²⁷ Shari'ati, *Chahâr Zendân-e Ensân* (Four Prisons of Mankind), p. 110.
- ²⁸ Martin Heidegger, basic writings from *Being and Time* (1927) to *The Task of Thinking* (1964) ; edited by David Farrell Krell. (New York: Harper & Row, 1977). Perhaps he was the one who united the two philosophical approaches of Existentialism of Soren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche and the Phenomenology of Husserl in his inquiry into human beings.
- ²⁹ Shari'ati, *Chahâr Zendân-e Ensân* (Four Prisons of Mankind), p. 111.
- ³⁰ Shari'ati, *Shenâkht va Târikh-e Adiân* (Recognition and The History of Religions), pp. 249-250.
- ³¹ For further information see, Shari'ati, *Bâzgasht Be Khishtan: Bâzgasht Be Kodâm Khishtan?* (Return to Self: Return to which Self?) (Majmou'eh Asâr Vol. 4). (Tehran: Hoseiniyeh Ershâd, 1361/1982), p. 394.
- ³² Shari'ati, *Chahâr Zendân-e Ensân* (Four Prisons of Mankind), p. 112.
- ³³ For detailed information on the subject of Naturalism, see, Newton Garver and Peter H. Hare eds., *Naturalism and Rationality* (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1986).
- ³⁴ For further information on the Materialist and its philosophy, see Perry Anderson, *In the Tracks of Historical Materialism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). Also Howard Robinson, *Matter and Sense: A Critique of Contemporary Materialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 1-125.
- ³⁵ For more information on Historicism see Peter Gay and Gerald J. Cavanaugh et.al, eds., *Historians at Work*, vol 1. (New York: Harper and Row, 1972.)
- ³⁶ Shari'ati, *Chahâr Zendân-e Ensân* (Four Prisons of Mankind), pp. 113-128.
- ³⁷ Ibid., 128-137.
- ³⁸ Shari'ati, *Islâm-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. 2 (*Majmou'eh-ye Asâr Vol. 17*) (Collected Works). (Tehran: Inteshârât-e Qalam, 1375/1993), pp. 46-47.
- ³⁹ For further information on the instigators of change, see, Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*. Abridgement of Volumes I-VI by D.C. Somervell. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 244-246.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 39-41 and 51-59.

⁴¹ Ibid., 245.

⁴² It seems Shari'ati has concurred with Oswald Spengler's idea of the "biological life-span", that every civilization follows the same process of human age, through birth, adulthood, old age and death. Cited from Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*. Abridgement of Volumes I-VI by D.C. Somervell. , 248. See also, Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. 2, pp. 51-52.

⁴³ Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. 2, pp. 53-64.

⁴⁴ Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini* (World-view). (Solon, Ohio: Muslim Student Association, 1358/1978), pp. 14-15.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 15-17.

⁴⁶ As mentioned in chapter three, for further information on the hostilities of Cain and Abel, see, the Bible, Genesis 4:1-15 and the Qur'an, 5: 30-34. For its historical interpretation see, Shari'ati, *Falsafeh Târikh , Hâbil-Qâbil* (Philosophy of History, Cain -Abel) in *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol 1. (Tehran: Qalam publication, 1375/1995), pp. 50-63. Also in Shari'ati, *Bazgasht* (Return). (Tehran: Huseiniyeh Ershâd, n.d.), pp. 375-381.

⁴⁷ Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini* (World-view), pp. 18-20.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 21-28.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 30-36.

⁵⁰ Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. 2, p. 65.

⁵¹ Qur'an, 7: 34.

⁵² Shari'ati, *Islām-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. 2, p. 66.

⁵³ Ibid., 66.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 67.

⁵⁵ Qur'an, 6: 152.

⁵⁶ Qur'an, 25: 22.

⁵⁷ For further information on Shari'ati's view on migration, see, Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini va Ideology* (World-View and Ideology), pp. 331-344.

⁵⁸ For further information on this issue, see, Shari'ati *Veizjegehâ-ye Quroon-e Jadid* (Characteristics of the New Centuries) or (*Majmou'eh-ye Asâr*, Vol. 31) (Tehran: Pezjmân, 1376/1996), pp.155-157. He also enumerates four types of migrations: a) Migration of an individual, which is physical and due in large part, to political pressure. This type of departure is an indication of a lack of responsibility on the part of an individual towards his society. b) Migration of a responsible person who feels that staying in his society would result in annihilation of his goal and himself. Hence, physical departure would allow him to continue his struggle for justice and the just cause. He gives the example of prophet Muhammad. c) Migration to the closed societies for the expansion of the human mission. In this type of migration, a person feels a global obligation and responsibility for bringing about proper changes to a closed society. d)

Scientific migration of the scientists for research and understanding nature and the laws of nature in order to help other human beings. e) Migration from within, which is the ultimate migration of self from any kind of worldly bondage towards perfection, with the final stage a spiritual departure to God. See Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini va Ideology* (World-View and Ideology), pp. 358-365.

⁵⁹ Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini va Ideology* (World-View and Ideology), p. 183.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 349-351.

⁶¹ For further information on the issue of the nineteenth century movements of al-Afghâni and Abduh see Shari'ati, *Islâm-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. 1 (*Majmou'eh-ye Asâr*, Vol. 16), pp. 197-203.

⁶² Shari'ati, *Jahân-Bini va Ideology* (World-View and Ideology), pp. 351-356.

⁶³ Shari'ati, *Bâzgasht Be Khishtan: Bâzgasht Be Kodâm hishtan?* (Return to Self: Return to which Self?) (*Majmou'eh Asâr* Vol. 4), pp. 53-55.

⁶⁴ Shari'ati, *Islâm-Shenâsi* (Islamology), vol. 1 (*Majmou'eh-ye Asâr*, Vol. 16), p. 72.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 73.

⁶⁶ Here, Shari'ati is not promoting the idea of a superficial democracy or dictatorship. What he had in mind was uncorrupted, responsible, unselfish, and sincere religious, not secular leadership. See Ibid., p. 73

Conclusion

¹ Mehdi Bazargân introduction to *Shakhsiyyat va Andish-e Doktor Ali Shari'ati* (Character and the Ideas of Doctor Ali Shari'ati). Edited by J'afar Saeedi (Tehran: Chapbakhsh, 1376/1997), pp. 15-28.

² Ibid., p. 21.

³ Kazem Sâmî, "Simâie az Doktor Ali Shari'ati (Distinguishing Characteristic of Doctor Ali Shari'ati)," in J'afar Saeedi ed. *Shakhsiyyat va Andish-e Doktor Ali Shari'ati* (Character and the Ideas of Doctor Ali Shari'ati), pp. 86-93.

⁴ See Ali Hojati Kermâni, "Shenâkht-e Shakhsiyyat-e Momtâz-e Dokto Ali Shari'ati va Naghsh-e Hassâs-e Vey dar Ehyâye Taffakor-e Eslâmi" (Recognizing the Distinguished Character of Doctor Ali Shari'ati and His Sensitive Role in Revival of the Islamic Thought) Cited from J'afar Saeedi ed. *Shakhsiyyat va Andish-e Doktor Ali Shari'ati* (Character and the Ideas of Doctor Ali Shari'ati), pp. 29-41.

⁵ Ibid., 30.

⁶ See Husayn Yousafi Oshkouri, "Shari'ati, Mosleh Bozorg-e Mo'âser (Shari'ati, the Great Modern Reformer)," in J'afar Saeedi ed. *Shakhsiyyat va Andish-e Doktor Ali Shari'ati* (Character and the Ideas of Doctor Ali Shari'ati), p. 53.

⁷ Ali Akbar Kasmâei, "Simâ-ye Shari'ati az Lâbelâ-ye Asârash (Distinguishing Characteristics of Shari'ati through his works)," in J'afar Saeedi ed. *Shakhsiyyat va Andish-e Doktor Ali Shari'ati* (Character and the Ideas of Doctor Ali Shari'ati), pp. 100-103.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 107-112.

⁹ Abdul Karim Soroush, "Doktor Shari'at va Bâz Sâzi-e Fekr-e Dini (Doctor Shari'ati and Reconstruction of Religious Thoughts)," in J'afar Saeedi ed. *Shakhsiyyat va Andish-e Doktor Ali Shari'ati* (Character and the Ideas of Doctor Ali Shari'ati), p. 191.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 195-196.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 221.

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